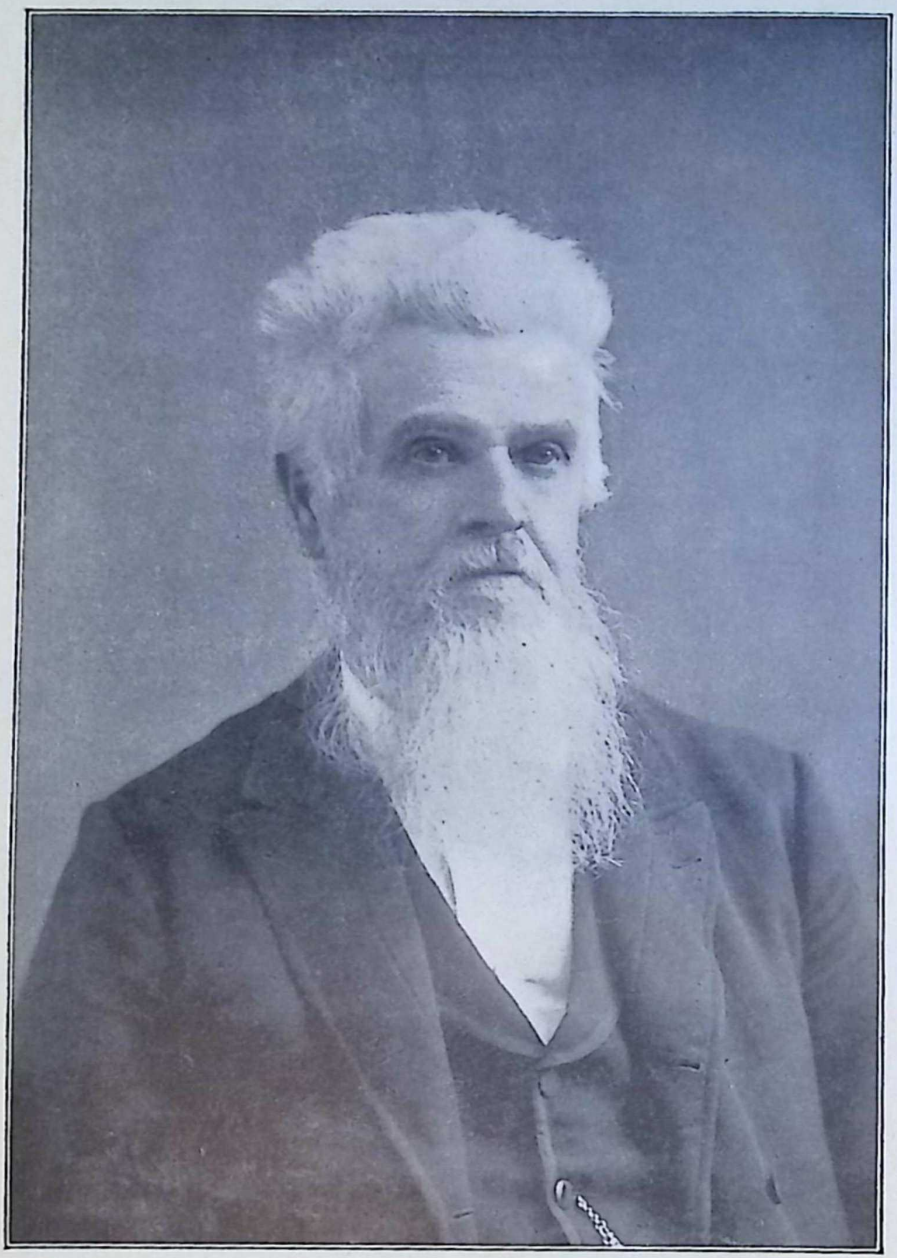
# Sermons and Discussions

Cartledge



REV. GROVES H. CARTLEDGE.

# Sermons and Discussions

WITH

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

BY THE LATE

REV. GROVES H. CARTLEDGE.

EDITED BY HIS SONS

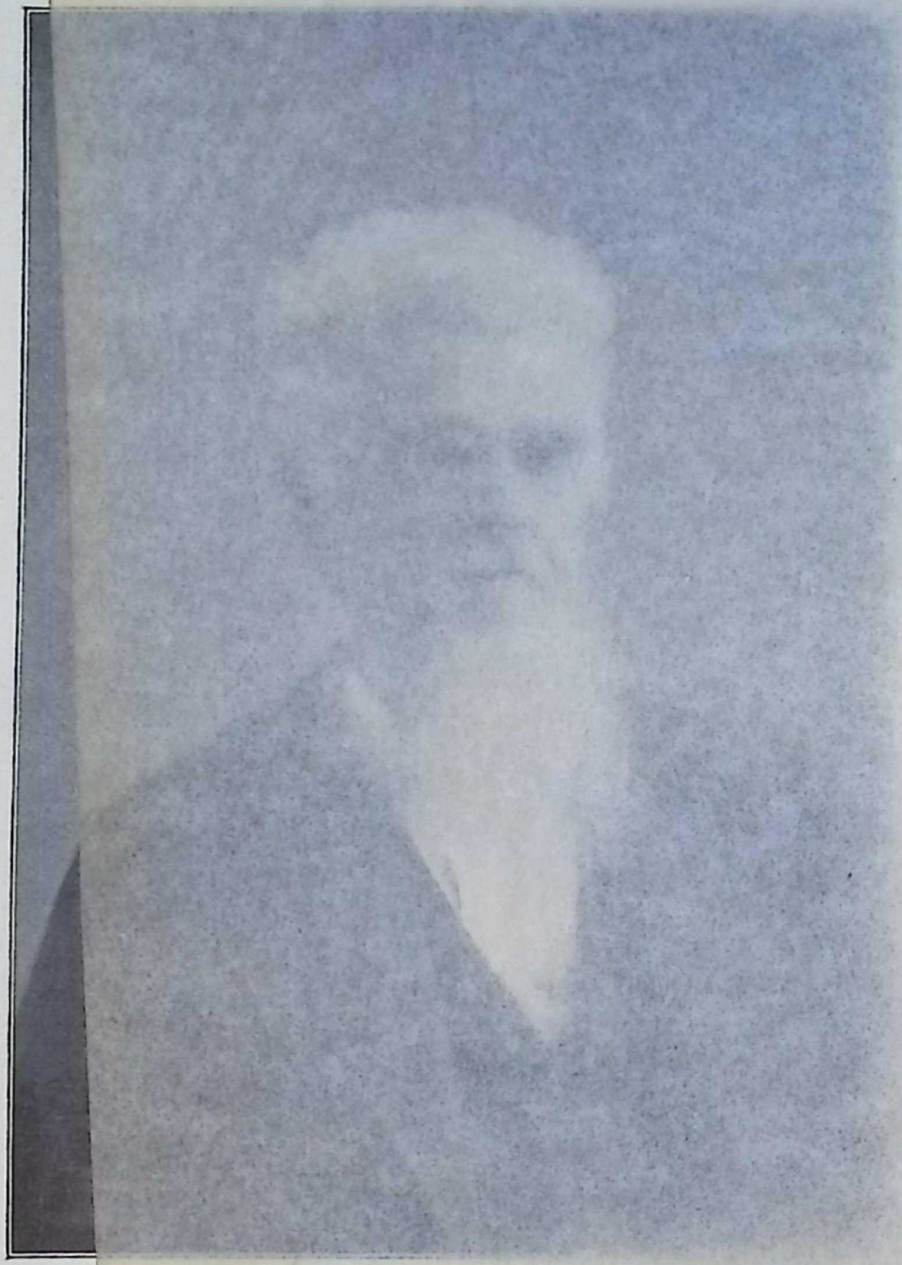
REV. THOMAS D. CARTLEDGE

REV. SAMUEL J. CARTLEDGE

RICHMOND, VA.

WHITTET & SHEPPERSON, PUBLISHERS AND PRINTERS

1903



REV. GROVES H. [illegible]

# Sermons and Discussions

WITH

## AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY

BY THE LATE

REV. GROVES H. CARTLEDGE

EDITED BY HIS SONS

REV. THOMAS D. CARTLEDGE

REV. SAMUEL J. CARTLEDGE

RICHMOND, VA.

WHITTET & SHEPPERSON, PUBLISHERS AND PRINTERS

1903

LIBRARY
ogical Seminary
MOND, VA.

# CONTENTS.


PAGE.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY, . . . . . 9

SERMONS AND DISCUSSIONS:

THE DECREES OF GOD, . . . . . 43

ORIGINAL SIN AND TOTAL DEPRAVITY, . . . . . 101

IMPUTATION, . . . . . 111

REGENERATION, . . . . . 117

SANCTIFICATION, . . . . . 133

THE FINAL PERSEVERANCE OF SAINTS, . . . . . 146

THE PERPETUITY OF THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT, . . 161

THE CHURCH'S DEPENDENCE UPON CHRIST, . . . . . 190

THE SERVANT OF CHRIST SEEKING A BRIDE FOR HIS MASTER, . . . . . 197

THE NATURE OF SAVING FAITH, . . . . . 207

GOD'S WILL OUR RULE OF LIFE, . . . . . 215

AN EXPOSITION OF ROMANS vi. 4, . . . . . 224

POEMS:

THE ISLE OF THE BLEST, . . . . . 234

WHAT IS LIFE? . . . . . 237

MY LIFE, . . . . . 239

# PREFACE.

In the composition of this work I have been actuated by several distinct motives.

First, I hope to confirm and edify those Christians who are already sound in the faith.

Secondly, I wish to guide and instruct inquirers after truth, whether they be sinners inquiring the way of life, or saints seeking a fuller knowledge of the will of God as revealed in his Word.

Thirdly, I desire to add my humble contribution to the efforts now being made to promote Christian union and fellowship. This age is more distinguished than any former one for the efforts made, and the hopes entertained by Christians generally, to draw closer together "in the unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace." I am not without hope that these efforts may eventually prove successful, and that these fondly cherished hopes may at length be realized; but I well know that all real and desirable Christian union must be founded upon unity of sentiment and faith. In the following pages I have endeavored to set forth in a clear light some of the most important truths of the gospel, and to prove and

illustrate them in such a manner that the humblest child of God might be able to understand them.

Lastly, I desire to leave this work behind me, to preach the gospel after my lips shall have been closed in death. For nearly thirty years I have been trying with the living voice to proclaim the glad tidings of salvation; but gray hairs are gathering upon me. My earthly labors must soon end. I would not, if I could, live always; but I wish to do good, even though my voice be hushed on earth; and I commit and commend this humble work to the present and future generations of fallen men, hoping and praying that, by the blessing of God, it may guide them out of darkness into light, even into the good old way which leads to glory eternal.

If my fondest wishes in this regard should be gratified, even in some small degree, let the Triune God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, have all the praise, now and evermore. Amen.

GROVES H. CARTLEDGE.

JEFFERSON, GA., *March* 27, 1874.

## NOTE BY THE EDITORS.

THE discussions in this volume, the fruit of his best thought, the author was never able to publish. After his death, they came into our hands, and we determined to carry into execution the purpose that he had cherished so long.

For several reasons we decided to re-write them altogether, making such alterations as we thought desirable. Accordingly, some things have been omitted, and some added. In some instances a different arrangement has been adopted; and the phraseology has been altered wherever, in our humble judgment, it could be improved; but nothing has been omitted that was essential to the author's argument, nothing added that he did not devoutly hold, and the alterations in arrangement and manner of expression he would, no doubt, heartily approve.

The sermons, with the exception of "The Perpetuity of the Abrahamic Covenant," were all written in the early years of his ministry, and while they do not compare in strength and vigor with the unwritten discourses of his mature manhood, it is believed that they will be read, notwithstanding, with pleasure and profit.

# AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

IN compliance with requests from my children, and from a large number of friends, I undertake this autobiography.

In the early settlement of Virginia a Mr. Cartledge, whose first name I never knew, came from Wales, it is believed, and settled somewhere in Virginia. Joseph Cartledge, his only son, so far as I know, settled in North Carolina, on a creek, which, from him, was named Cartledge's Creek. About the time of the war of the Revolution, he, with four sons and one daughter, Sarah, wife of Uriah Blanchard, removed from North Carolina, and settled in Columbia county, Georgia, near the Savannah River. He was then an old man, and did not long survive.

The four sons of Joseph Cartledge were Joseph, Samuel, Edmund, and James. All of them, with their brother-in-law, Uriah Blanchard, were soldiers of the Revolution.

Of these sons, James lived and died in Columbia county, Georgia. He left five sons, John, James, Thomas, Jeremiah and Benjamin, and two daughters, one of whom married her cousin, Billington Blanchard, and the other a Mr. Barrett, of Lincolnton, Georgia.

Edmund was a doctor, and was very popular in his day, both as physician and surgeon. He removed to

Edgefield county, South Carolina, and died there in the prime of life, leaving a large family, of whom I know nothing, except that his youngest daughter, Sarah, married a Mr. Pearce, of Augusta, Georgia, and afterwards settled near Sumpter Station, Alabama.

Samuel also removed from Georgia, and settled in Edgefield county, South Carolina. He was a Baptist preacher, and both he and his brother Edmund are mentioned in Campbell's history of the Baptists in Georgia. He lived to be very old, dying about 1845. I never saw him, but I have talked with a number of persons who were brought up under his ministry. He was possessed of the characteristics of the Welsh people, ready wit, plainness of speech, frankness and candor. He would relate, in the pulpit, or anywhere else, the meanest act that he ever did, or the meanest thought that ever entered his head. For example, in his old age, after he had buried the wife of his youth, he was sent for to pray for a very sick parishioner in middle life. While on his knees praying, he was observed by those present to be laboring under difficulties, as if embarrassed and burdened; and when he had finished, he sat with bowed head for a moment, and then said to the wife of the sick man, "My sister, all the time I was trying to pray for your husband, and trying to pray in faith, the devil was whispering in my ear, saying, 'Now, Daddie Cartledge, pray without faith, and the sick man will die, and then you can marry the widow.'" "Daddie Cartledge" reared a large family. One son, Victor,

died in Alabama many years ago. He was the father of Rev. A. M. Cartledge, a Baptist minister of Winnsboro, South Carolina.

Joseph Cartledge, Jr., brother of James, Edmund and Samuel, was my grandfather. He was a brave soldier of the Revolution, as were all his male kindred who were able to bear arms. He knew no fear. He lived unmarried until he was forty-seven, and then married Dilly Page, a widow, the daughter of Luke Landers. He did not long survive, and left two children—Nancy, who in time became the wife of William Brown, and Samuel, my father, born two or three months after his father's death. After grandfather's death, my grandmother was twice married, first to a Mr. Roberts, and afterwards to a Mr. Swann. She was thus married four times, raised a family by each of her husbands, buried all four of them in succession, and then lived a widow for the last twenty years of her life. She died in Benton county, Alabama, in 1851, in the ninety-third year of her life.

Of all persons whom I have personally known, my grandmother Cartledge was gifted with the most entertaining conversational powers. She could make her conversation interesting and attractive to young and old alike, to the learned and the unlearned. She had a much better education than most women of her time, her father, Luke Landers, a successful teacher, having given his children an unusually good education for that day and time.

Luke Landers had come from North Carolina to

Columbia county, Georgia. He had five sons and six daughters, most of whom I never saw. Two of his sons moved to Indiana early in this century. One daughter, Mary, married Henry Spaulding, of Columbia county, and their daughter married Mark Manning, and was the mother of Rev. William Manning, a Baptist minister, under whose ministry I embraced the hope of salvation. Another son of Luke Landers, John, became a Baptist minister, and like his kinsman, Rev. William Manning, had a much better education and possessed far more intelligence than the average Baptist preacher of that day.

My father, Samuel Cartledge, son of Joseph Cartledge, Jr., and Dilly Landers Page, was born in Columbia county, Georgia, March 28, 1795. He never saw his father on earth, he having died two or three months before.

Having given this short sketch of my paternal ancestry, it is now proper that I should briefly trace the ancestry of my mother.

My mother, Agnes Weakly Groves, was the youngest child of Stephen and Isabella Groves, and was born in what was then Wilkes, but is now Madison county, Georgia, August 15, 1792.

My grandfather, Stephen Groves, was born in Lancashire, England, January 6, 1740. He was the son of William Groves, who was the son of Stephen Groves. When he was twenty-three or twenty-four years old he came to this country, his brother William having preceded him many years before. While searching for his brother in Cumber-

land county, Pennsylvania, near Carlisle, he found Isabella Weakly, and after the usual course of love-making, took her to wife, and settled down, and became a tanner and farmer.

In 1787, Stephen Groves, his son-in-law, John McCurdy, and many of their neighbors, sold their lands in Cumberland county, Pennsylvania, and set out for Wilkes county, Georgia. When they reached Abbeville, South Carolina, they heard of the raid made on the frontiers of Georgia by the Creek Indians, in the summer of 1787, and they stopped in Abbeville county, rented lands, and made a crop, and then, in the fall of 1788, continued their journey, and settled in the fork of North and South Broad River, in what is now Madison county, Georgia.

Stephen Groves died in March, 1839, lacking only nine months of having completed his hundred years of life on earth. He was a large man, with great physical strength, until he reached middle life, when sciatica dislocated one of his hips, and compelled him to use a crutch. His mind and memory remained good to the last, and, what is more remarkable, when eighty years old, having previously lost all of his teeth, except one in front, he cut a new set, complete, except the front one, and his eyesight became as good as it was in his youth. His new teeth, however, did not last very long, but his sight continued good to the last day of life.

Stephen Groves was an ardent Revolutionary patriot, and instilled into the breasts of his children the principles of liberty and patriotism, as the follow-

ing incident will show: While on his way from Pennsylvania to Georgia he stopped, late one afternoon, at a farm house somewhere in South Carolina, to buy some corn and fodder to feed his horses. After getting as much as he needed, the farmer told him that he had just finished gathering the corn from a certain field on the road just ahead, and had hauled up to the house all the pumpkins that he wanted for his own use, and that he might take as many as he wanted of those that were left to feed his horses. Thanking the farmer, grandfather called his daughter, Mary, fourteen years old, and his son, Sam, about twelve, and told them to run on ahead, and carry the pumpkins out to the road. The farmer then called his own daughter, about the age of Mary, and told her to go with them and show them the way, and help them carry the pumpkins. As the three children were on their way, Mary Groves said to the farmer's daughter, "Did your father fight for liberty?" "No," said the child. "Was he a Tory, then?" asked Mary. Receiving no answer, she said to her brother, "Come, Sam, let us go back; this man was a Tory, and I don't want our horses to eat his old Tory pumpkins." But Sam, though equally patriotic, perhaps, took a more practical view of the matter, and his father's horses and the four magnificent blacks of his brother-in-law, John McCurdy, had a rare treat that night.

Isabella, the wife of Stephen Groves, died in 1829, eighty years of age. Her parents, James and Janot Weakly, were born in the north of Ireland, but grew up in Cumberland county, Pennsylvania, and there

met, loved and married. Janot Weakly before marriage was a Wilson, and there is to this day a well grounded family tradition that she was an extraordinary woman, remarkable for her force of character, her intelligence and her piety. At any rate, the name Wilson, and also the name Weakly, which she bore after her marriage, are still preserved among us. My youngest granddaughter bears the name of Wilson, and my youngest grandson the name of Weakly.

James Weakly, my great-grandfather, was a quiet, sensible, say-nothing farmer, remarkable for nothing but his good sense and his unobtrusive piety.

His daughter, my grandmother, Isabella Groves, was a small woman, remarkable for energy, activity, good sense, and few words. Like her daughter, my mother, she never said a foolish thing in all her life.

Stephen and Isabella Groves had seven children—two sons, Samuel and Robert, and five daughters, Elizabeth, wife of John McCurdy; Mary, wife of David Calvert; Jane, wife of Henry Manning; Isabella, wife of James Barron, and Agnes, my mother.

My mother, Agnes Groves, was born in what is now Madison county, Georgia, August 15, 1792. Her parents, being Scotch-Irish, were, of course, Presbyterians, and were members of New Hope Church, of which Rev. John Newton was then pastor. I now hold in my hand an old memorandum book, in which John Newton recorded the names of infants baptized by him at New Hope, and under the head of

"Infants Baptized at New Hope, Nov. 24, 1792," I find this record, "Agnes Weakly, daughter of Stephen Groves and Isabella, his wife." That little babe, then less than four months old, was afterwards married to Samuel Cartledge, and in 1820 became my mother; and when I was eighteen years old, having been reared by a Baptist father, I stood in that same house, before that old, tall pulpit, and made my public profession of faith in my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and was baptized by Rev. James W. H. Freeman, and my membership has never been removed. Who can blame me for my strong attachment to all the memories of that old church, to its founder, father and first pastor? In the language of the Psalmist, I can truthfully say, "If I forget thee, may my right hand forget her cunning. If I do not remember thee, may my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth."

My father and mother were married when he was in his twentieth year, and she in her twenty-third. Their first child, Elizabeth Weakly, was born October 13, 1817. She was a woman of a good understanding, a beautiful person and excellent piety. When eighteen years old, she took a severe cold, which destroyed her health, and eventually brought on epileptic fits, and she died December 23, 1860.

I was born, the second child of my parents, about three miles southeast of Danielsville, Madison county, Georgia, February 15, 1820. My mother has often told me that I weighed eleven pounds, and was born with a caul over my face, which the midwife told her

was a sign that I should see sights. *I have seen them,* but not such sights as she meant.

Some time after his marriage, my father united with the Baptist Church, at old Lystra, in Madison county. He soon became very active in exhortation and prayer, and before long was licensed to preach. He did not feel, however, that he was called to preach. His education was very limited. He could read a little, but could not write his name. He was poor, and had a wife and one child, and consequently did not see how it was possible to secure such an education as he thought necessary before entering the ministry. His brethren urged him to preach, and at length he became greatly disturbed, fearing, as some of the brethren suggested, lest he should, like Jonah, be guilty of resisting the call of God. While he was in this state of embarrassment and perplexity, I was born. When he saw that I was a son, he took me in his arms, went into a private room, knelt down, and said: "Lord, my brethren are urging me to preach the gospel, but I do not feel qualified. Here is my first-born son; please take him, and make a preacher of him, and excuse me." He rose from his knees in perfect peace, assured that God had heard his prayer; and from that day he never had a doubt that I would be a preacher, and was never again troubled in regard to his own call to the ministry.

These facts he frequently related to me when I was very small, and there has never been a time when I was not impressed with the thought that God had called me to preach the gospel. Oftentimes, when

very young, my impulse to preach would become so strong that I would retire to the woods alone, and imagining that the trees and bushes around me were men, women and children, I would tell them of heaven and hell, and warn them to flee from the wrath to come.

In January, 1824, I started to school. I was not quite four years old, and was small for my age, for my health was not good. Father and mother were then living in Newton county, Georgia, two miles west or northwest from Covington. My teacher, "Daddy Gill," as he was called, was an Irishman, sixty years old, and the pupils not only recited their lessons aloud, but studied aloud, each one trying to make more noise than the others. I was not entered as a pupil, but went merely to keep my sister company; and yet, by the time I completed my fourth year, I could read readily, if not accurately, in the New Testament. In a few weeks, however, my health failed, and I was compelled to quit school. My eyes were weak, and my head ached every day.

About the beginning of 1826, I was started to school again. Father had, in the meantime, moved to Gwinnett county, three miles east of Rockbridge. Here my teacher was Joshua Welsh, a young man just from Virginia, the best country teacher I ever knew. He was a fine disciplinarian, and taught his pupils manners as well as books. I continued in this school, the first year, five or six months. Some of the pupils had, as Readers, Peter Parley's Tales and Histories, then lately issued. During the hours of

recess, when the owners were out at play, I was in the house reading these books, and in a few months I had read all of Peter Parley's published works; and in this way, by neglecting exercise, and by too much mental strain, my health broke down, and I was again compelled to quit school.

The next year, I attended the same school, but only for a few months, for my health was still frail, and I soon had to quit. In fact, until I was twenty-one years old, my longest term in school never exceeded four months without an interruption from bad health; and yet I have survived to the age of seventy-three, without ever having been confined to my bed, or to the house, for more than a week at a time.

In 1830, my father having removed to Jackson county, eight miles north of Jefferson, I attended the school of James McLester for a few months.

The next year, at the same place, I attended the school of Rev. Robert McAlpine, from East Tennessee. Mr. McAlpine had been a captain in the army of Gen. Andrew Jackson, in the war of 1812, and was educated in the school of Rev. Samuel Doak, of Tennessee. He was the grandfather of two of our foreign missionaries, Mrs. H. C. DuBose, of China, and Rev. R. E. McAlpine, of Japan, and also of Rev. R. B. McAlpine, now of Alabama. He was an excellent man, and an able and faithful preacher. To him I owe a debt of gratitude which I expect to be always in paying.

In addition to the usual branches of study, Robert McAlpine taught the Shorter Catechism to all the

children of Presbyterian parents, and to such others as were not forbidden by their parents to study it. My father, though a Baptist, did not object to my studying it, declaring that it taught exactly what he believed, except the question in regard to baptism, and that it would not hurt me to learn that. In five weeks I learned and recited to my teacher the whole Catechism, having consulted all the proof-texts, and having been convinced that they taught the doctrines that they were cited to prove.

My brethren have, I believe, kindly given me some credit as a theologian, and if I deserve any such credit, I attribute it mainly to the fact of my having studied the Shorter Catechism in the school of Robert McAlpine, in 1831; and I cherish for the good old man's memory the fondest and most grateful recollections.

After 1832, I was large enough to work, and as my father was poor, and had a large family to support, it became necessary for me to go to work, and, therefore, I had no further opportunity to go to school for several years, except a few weeks in the summer, when crops had been laid by. In the summer of 1837, my father having returned to Madison county, I went to school for a few weeks to Oliver Threlkeld, at New Hope. Up to that time, although I was seventeen, I had never studied arithmetic.

In the summer of 1840, William Lucas Groves, who had spent two years in the school of Rev. Henry Safford, at Cherokee Corner, opened a school in the neighborhood. I entered this school in August, and

continued in it until December, and in these five months I went through arithmetic, Smith's Geography, and Kirkham's English Grammar, thus learning more in the one short session spent in this school than I had learned in all the schools I had attended previously.

My ambition then was to qualify myself to teach, in order to make money enough to enable me to pursue my studies, and prepare myself for the ministry. When I was sixteen, my father had said to me: "Groves, I know you want a good education, and I am too poor to give it to you; but if you will work for me, and help me support the family until you are eighteen, then you shall be free, and can work out your own education." When I had reached my eighteenth year, father said to me one day: "Groves, I will keep my word. You have worked for me faithfully, and you are now free. Go to work for yourself, and complete your education." But father had a family of ten, besides myself, and my oldest brother was four years younger than I, and not able to do a man's work, so I said to him: "Father, I cannot leave you yet; my conscience will not let me. I will stay with you a year or two longer, at least."

When 1840 came, I said to father: "I will be twenty years old the 15th of February. I will work until the crop is laid by this year, and the three boys can gather the crop, and I will enter Cousin Lucas Groves' school, and prepare myself to teach next year."

After the five months spent in this school, as related above, and while I was making my arrangements to

teach the next year, the Rev. Henry Safford, who was then preaching for us at New Hope, brought me a proposition from Mrs. A. M. Egerton, Principal of the Midway Female Seminary, to board me while I studied in the Midway Academy, the preparatory school of Oglethorpe University. Mrs. Egerton had in her house a large number of her pupils as boarders, and consequently had to keep a number of negro servants, and all she asked of me, in return for my board, was to keep watch over the servants, and control them for her. I gladly accepted her proposition, and on January 18, 1841, I walked into Midway. I found that Mrs. Egerton had a garden and lot of about two acres to cultivate, with three or four negro men, and four or five negro women servants, and I verily thought I would have an easy time; but I soon discovered my mistake. Mrs. Egerton was a Massachusetts Yankee, of the Adams family, and would neither control the servants, nor permit me to do it. When I gave the servants their orders, she would countermand them, and my position soon became intolerable. I informed Dr. Talmage, who was chairman of the Faculty of Oglethorpe University, and he took me away, and put me to board with the Rector of the Academy, Randolph H. Ramsey, one of the best teachers I ever saw. Here I continued to board until the close of 1841, and made rapid progress in my studies.

As an illustration of this, I may mention the fact that when I entered the Academy in January, and recited my first lesson in Latin grammar, there was a

class in school reading the Bucolics of Virgil. Before the close of the year I was reading the Æneid with that class, and soon left them all behind, except one, Elworth T. Parke. I became so much attached to him that I studied with him, and helped him in his lessons, and the next year we entered the same class in College, and graduated together in November, 1845.

When Dr. Talmage removed me from Mrs. Egerton's, he told me that he had made arrangements with some friends to pay my board. He did not tell me who they were, and I have never known; but God knows, and they have their reward.

When I first went to Midway, in 1841, I bundled up my clothes, and some old Latin books that had been given me by my uncle, Col. Samuel Groves, in a single bundle that I could swing over my shoulder as I walked. My cousin, William L. Groves, went with me the first eighteen miles, to Father Safford's, near Cherokee Corner. The next morning, Father Safford having given me letters of introduction to John Cunningham, elder of the Presbyterian Church at Greensboro, to Miles G. Harris, elder of the church at Mt. Zion, and to Dr. Talmage, of Oglethorpe University, I shouldered my bundle and set out afoot for Greensboro, thirty-one or thirty-two miles away, where I arrived late in the day, foot-sore and weary, and was given a cordial welcome by John Cunningham. Next morning, Mr. Cunningham sent me in his buggy twelve miles on my way to Mr. Harris', at Mt. Zion, where I spent the night. Mr. Harris sent

me on horseback ten or twelve miles on the road to Milledgeville. I walked the rest of the way, and arrived in due time; and the first man I met, walking the streets of Midway, was Dr. Talmage.

While I was boarding at Mr. Ramsey's, in 1841, I roomed on the campus in one of the dormitories, and one day took a notion that I would make me a cot to sleep on. With this in view, I bought some cotton bagging, and some tacks, and went down to Mr. Joseph Lane's carpenter shop, got two pieces of scantling, and, using some of Mr. Lane's tools, made my cot. Mr. Lane having refused to receive pay for the lumber and the use of his tools, I thanked him, shouldered my cot, and went back to my room, half a mile away. That night, as I learned long afterward, Mr. Lane said to one of his daughters, then seventeen years old: "Annie, I have found you a husband. One of Mr. Ramsey's pupils, Mr. Cartledge, came to the shop to-day, and made a cot for himself, and I thought he would make a good husband for you." I had then barely met her, and for two years longer did not visit her; but more than six years afterwards she became my wife sure enough. She has walked with me these forty-six years, through cloud and sunshine, through joy and sorrow; she abides with me still; God's best earthly gift to man, a faithful wife.

After I entered college, in June, 1842, I was obliged to advance with my class, and hence had time to do a great deal of general reading, especially ancient and modern history. While in the sophomore class, in

1843, I commenced the study of theology privately, under the tuition of Dr. Talmage. In two years I went over the whole field of theological study, except Hebrew, Dr. Talmage declaring that he was too rusty to give me instruction in that.

My habit while in college was to blow out my lamp at eleven o'clock at night, and light it again at three o'clock in the morning. Before retiring I prepared all my recitations for the next day. The first thing in the morning, I reviewed my lessons for the day, and then commenced my reading in theology and history. During my last year, however, my health was so much impaired that I could not keep up these habits of study, and was forced to take more sleep and more exercise.

In 1843, having walked, one of the hottest days in June, from Greensboro to Little River, in Putnam county, near its entrance into the Oconee, with blistered feet, and worn out with the heat of the day, I stopped at the ferry, and shouted for the ferryman on the opposite side. His wife came to the door, and told me that he was not at home. Four weeks before, on my way home, in company with Henry Safford, we had had to take a batteau and row ourselves across.

So after waiting a little while, and looking in vain for a batteau, I pulled off my clothes, swam across the river, loosed the ferryboat, and carried it over to the Putnam side. Then I put on my clothes, got my bundle, and, getting into the boat, poled myself across.

The ferryman's wife would not allow me to stay all night, even though I proposed to sleep on the floor. She said it was only half a mile to the next house; but when I reached it, I found it occupied by negroes. They told me it was four or five miles to the next white man's house, on the road to Milledgeville, but that their master lived only a mile up the road to Clinton, and they knew he would give me lodging for the night.

So about nine o'clock, while the moon was in mid-heaven, shining brightly, I walked up and found William Sanford sitting on his front porch. To my question, "Can I get lodging with you to-night?" he replied, "Yes, come in and take a seat." "Which way did you come?" he asked. "I have walked from Greensboro to-day," I replied. "How did you get across the river? I saw the ferryman this afternoon going toward the still-house, and I don't suppose he is at home yet." I told him how I had got across; and then he wanted to know where I was going, and when I told him, "To Midway," he said with a good deal of surprise, "What! going to college?" Being assured that that was my purpose, he said very emphatically, "Well, you will do."

He proposed to have supper prepared, and though I told him I had a cold lunch with me, which I would eat and go to bed, he insisted that I should not go to bed in his house without a warm supper. After supper, the old man took a candle and showed me to my room, saying as he left, "Now, as you are afoot, you will want to start early, but we will have an

early breakfast for you, and you must not leave till you have had breakfast."

As I was leaving next morning, I asked him what his charges were. "Nothing," he replied, "except that you come and see us as often as you can. Never pass this way without calling on us; and when you have a few days' leisure from college, come out and spend it with us. And now," he continued, "as you are walking, I suppose funds are not any too abundant with you, and I want you to take this five-dollar bill. It will at least buy you a new pair of shoes."

I afterwards learned that William Sanford had started in life a poor boy, from Virginia; but when I knew him he owned two farms, had a hundred and fifty slaves, and two or three hundred thousand dollars in bank stock, and other securities. He had no child, but had educated, and settled in life, several of his own and his wife's nephews and nieces. Every time I called to see him he gave me some money, and I soon became ashamed to go. When I did not go as often as he wished, he sent me money by Dr. Talmage or some one else, and I never lacked funds from the day I became acquainted with William Sanford.

As I hobbled with blistered feet from the ferryman's cabin that night, I could not help indulging bitter thoughts against my fellow-creatures, and even against my Heavenly Father, and my heart was heavy and sad at the thought of my hard lot; but ever since that night, I have thanked God that the ferryman was not at home, and that the ferryman's wife would not let me sleep on the floor.

At that time, William Sanford was not a member of the church. His good wife was a Methodist, and many years before his death he, too, united with that church. He died in 1864. I cherish his memory with most grateful recollection, and shall never cease to thank the Lord that he led me, in this hard way, to the good old man's acquaintance.

I graduated November 12, 1845, sharing the first honor with a very dear friend, Virgilius Maro Barnes.

After my final examinations, in October, I took charge of a select school in Macon, Ga. I returned to Midway, however, to take part in the commencement exercises, and delivered the Latin salutatory, Virgil Barnes delivering the Valedictory. I closed my school the day before Christmas. I was, therefore, in Macon when the Synod of Georgia held its first meeting there, in November, 1845. During that meeting, I met Dr. A. W. Leland, professor of Theology in the Seminary at Columbia, and after conversation with him upon the subject, I determined to go to Columbia to take a course in Hebrew. Accordingly, I entered the Seminary in January, 1846. Dr. Leland and Dr. Howe were the only professors at that time. Dr. Thornwell was professor in the College of South Carolina, and Dr. Palmer was pastor of the Presbyterian Church.

In June, 1846, I was compelled to leave the Seminary on account of ill health. I first visited Midway to see my friends there, and more particularly my sweetheart. I then went to see my mother, who had

become a widow since I saw her last, my father having died January 16, 1846.

In September following, while reviewing my studies preparatory to my examination for licensure, I also began to review my past life, the state of my own heart, and my motives for entering the ministry. I discovered so much sin, and so many imperfections, that I felt wholly unworthy to enter the sacred calling. After studying and praying over the matter for several days, and being at last on the verge of despair, I went out one night alone to meditate and pray. After walking about the farm for some time, I threw myself down on my face, in the middle of a field of corn, and began to confess my sins. Suddenly, everywhere around me the light seemed to shine as brightly as day, and I seemed to see Jesus on the cross, and thought I heard him say, "I am bearing your sins, and dying as you deserve to die, that you may be justified and saved for my sake." Immediately my soul was filled with peace and joy ineffable, and I lay upon the ground, I know not how long, praising the Lord for his amazing goodness and mercy to a miserable sinner like me.

Of course, I saw no real, outward light that night. The light was in my own heart and mind. I had believed in Jesus as my Saviour long before, but never till then had I had such a clear and satisfying view of the plan of salvation.

I was licensed to preach by Hopewell Presbytery, at Greensboro, Georgia, on the first Sabbath of October, 1846. On my way to and from Presbytery,

I spent two nights in Lexington, and was invited by the elders of the church there, and also by the trustees of Meson Academy, to locate and take charge of the church and the Academy. I accepted the invitation, and began work January, 1847.

June 2, 1847, I was married to Miss Annie Lane, of Midway, Rev. John W. Baker, pastor of the church at Milledgeville, officiating.

I labored at Lexington two years. The double duty of preaching and teaching proved to be too much for my health. I moved to Madison county, and became a home missionary, laboring in Madison, and also in what is now Hart county. While thus engaged, I organized a church at Pleasant Hill, in Hart county. The organization took place in the wild woods, before the house was built, and the stump of a large pine tree served as a communion table.

In 1850, in connection with my labors as home missionary, I took charge of the church at New Hope, the church within whose bounds I was born in 1820, and into whose fellowship I entered in 1838.

In January, 1852, I began to preach at Hebron. In July, of the same year, at New Lebanon, now Homer. On the third Sabbath of October following, I was installed pastor of these two churches by Rev. Richard C. Ketchum, of Clarkesville, and Rev. Alonzo Church, D. D., President of Franklin College, at Athens.

In 1854, it became evident that the two churches could not support my family, and as the Hebron community desired to build up a good school at that

place, I consented to take charge of it, on condition that a suitable building be erected. The house was built, and on January 17, 1855, I opened the school, assisted by my wife. We soon had seventy pupils, many of them grown. Among them were J. B. Estes and Allen D. Candler. We continued this school for six quarters, when I broke down under the double duty of pastor and teacher, and was forced to give it up.

At the close of the year 1856, I was appointed as presbyterial evangelist for half my time, my churches consenting to this arrangement, though refusing to consent to the dissolution of the pastoral relation entirely. For the next two years, for half my time, I travelled and preached from place to place, mostly in Hart and Franklin counties. In 1858, I organized the church of Harmony, and resuscitated the church of Turkey Creek, now Hopewell. I did some work, too, at Carnesville, and also gathered some material for the church at Hartwell, though the organization here was not effected until after the close of the war. At the close of 1858, I again gave my entire time to Hebron and New Lebanon.

In 1859, Banks county was organized, and in 1860 Homer became the county seat, and New Lebanon Church changed her name to Homer Church.

In the year 1865, there occurred at Hebron and Homer one of the most remarkable local revivals ever known in Upper Georgia. The war had just closed, and the smoke of battle had barely cleared away, when God made bare his mighty arm. The

people were in great distress, and many of them almost in poverty, and out of the darkness God spoke to them.

I had been pastor of these churches for thirteen years. For four years past the minds of the people were so filled with anxiety and alarm over the state of the country that I had seen but little fruit resulting from my labors, and had become greatly depressed at my lack of success. As our third quarterly communion season drew nigh, my own heart, and the hearts of some of the people, were filled with intense longing for gracious visitations from on high. Indeed, some of us felt that we could not much longer live under the burden of our longings, unless the Master should come and bless us. About two weeks before the arrival of this communion, in the month of September, the Lord gave me a strong and abiding faith that we should receive a great blessing, and I announced the fact from the pulpit.

On Friday morning, I got up from my bed scarcely able to stand alone, drank a cup of coffee, mounted my horse, and rode to Homer, ten miles away, to begin the meeting. From the very first I saw many evidences of the Spirit's presence and power. I labored alone until the morning of the Sabbath, when Rev. Jacob L. Milburn, of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, came to my assistance. The meeting continued until Thursday afternoon, when it became necessary for us to close and go to Hebron.

For eight days we carried on the services at Hebron, and then returned to Homer, and spent

another week. At Hebron, for part of the time, I had the assistance of Brother Milburn and Brother Henry Newton, both of whom entered most heartily into the work, and seemed to enjoy it with all their souls.

The nature and order of the services at both places were the same. In the morning a prayer-meeting was held in the church, and at the same time an inquiry meeting in the session room. A sermon was preached in the forenoon, and another in the afternoon, with an interval of an hour between them for dinner on the grounds. No extraordinary means or appliances were used; the ordinary means of grace were amply sufficient. The preaching was the farthest possible from noisy, empty declamation. It was plain, doctrinal, practical, hortatory, consolatory and persuasive.

As a result of this work of grace, thirty-six souls united with the church at Hebron upon profession of their faith in the Lord Jesus, and thirty-nine at Homer; and besides this, the whole membership at both places were greatly quickened and edified. Indeed, while I have witnessed many revivals of religion, I have never seen any that seemed to have such a deep, happy and lasting effect upon the church itself.

The meetings were usually quiet and solemn as the grave. Once at Homer there were some slight outbursts of joy, but not enough to disturb our worship. Once at Hebron there was such an outburst of joy as I have never seen elsewhere. I have often attempted to describe this scene, and have as often failed. However, let me try again:

The interest of the congregation had constantly increased from Friday morning till Tuesday afternoon. Everything so far had been quiet and orderly. A goodly number had obtained hope, and many others were deeply concerned. Christians had been growing more and more happy, until it was becoming painful for them to suppress their emotions.

Such was the state of feeling in the vast assembly when Brother Milburn rose and began his sermon on that memorable day, which we still call the day of Pentecost. The text was the invitation of Moses to Hobab, "Come thou with us, and we will do thee good; for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel" (Numbers x. 29). In the introduction the preacher gave a historical narrative of the circumstances in which the words of the text were spoken. Before he had gotten through with these historical details, the emotions of the congregation became uncontrollable, and many began to give vent to their pent-up feelings in noisy demonstrations of joy. The preacher, finding that he could neither restrain the people, nor proceed with his sermon, simply said: "It is useless for me to try to preach. We, too, are journeying to that good land, of which the Lord hath said, 'I will give it you. Come thou with us, and we will do thee good.'"

The scene that followed beggars description. With scarcely an exception, every one in that great congregation was making some audible demonstration of joy; and yet every demonstration was appropriate and becoming. The usual expressions of joy were

laughter, the most hearty, joyous laughter ever heard, and shaking hands; friend with friend telling each other what the Lord had done for their souls, and praising God for his redeeming grace. Every eye seemed to sparkle with heavenly intelligence, and every countenance beamed with celestial radiance and glory.

Those of other denominations who were present were affected as we were, and expressed their joy just as we did. Those who, up to this hour, had been greatly alarmed on account of their sins, with only one or two exceptions, obtained deliverance, and seemed to be as happy as any of the rest.

After allowing the people to give expression to their joy for perhaps an hour, and wishing to reduce them to order, I called for a hymn. Several of our best singers began, but broke out into laughter before they had finished the first verse. Other efforts were made, but always with the same result.

Finding that the people were too happy to sing, I called on a good old Methodist brother to pray. Laughing as hard as he could, he replied, "Brother Cartledge, please call on some one else; I am too full to pray."

I then called on one of the older elders. He began, but before he had finished the first sentence, he broke out into loud, joyous laughter. Choking down his laughter with a great effort, he again began to pray, and again broke down as at first.

I then attempted to pray, and the people kept moderately quiet, but as soon as I had finished, they

broke out afresh. Abandoning all further effort to restrain their emotions, I left them to laugh and talk and shake hands until about four o'clock, when I rose and pronounced the benediction.

Then the happy people left the house, and started for their homes, still laughing and talking and praising God. In many homes these demonstrations continued nearly all night, the happy souls declaring that if they did not give expression to their emotions they would surely burst asunder.

Here this autobiography stops. A few more words will be added, simply to complete the brief outline of this unassuming, yet most interesting life story.

Father continued to be pastor of Hebron and Homer Churches as long as he lived, serving them continuously for a period of forty-seven and a half years.

At different times it became necessary to give part of his time to other churches near by, and in this way he served, for a longer or shorter period, the churches of Jefferson, Thyatira, Maysville, Carnesville and Mt. Hermon.

While thus serving Jefferson and Thyatira, he moved his family from his little farm, at Hebron, to Jefferson, to secure for his children the advantages of Martin Institute. Here he lived for three years, returning to the old home in January, 1877.

His talents were recognized throughout the State, and he was frequently called elsewhere. Flattering offers from towns and cities came, but nothing could

induce him to leave the people he had loved and served so long.

The last few years of his life, his health was much impaired. Twice he suffered a partial stroke of paralysis, which not only rendered it difficult for him to walk, but affected his vocal organs as well. Still he held on, determined, God willing, "to die in the harness." Accordingly, he continued to preach, even when too feeble to stand up in the pulpit, and when his articulation was so indistinct that many could not understand him.

But at length, increasing infirmities compelled him to give up active work. In order to relieve the churches of possible embarrassment, he offered his resignation. It was not accepted, however, his people wishing him to remain pastor as long as he lived. An assistant, therefore, was secured, first Rev. W. L. Barber, and then Rev. J. J. Harrell. Finally Rev. H. F. Hoyt, D. D., was called as associate pastor, and this relation continued to the end.

July 5, 1899, he fell asleep, aged seventy-nine. His last words were, "Peace, peace." The funeral services were conducted by Rev. H. F. Hoyt, D. D., who was assisted by Rev. L. A. Simpson, Rev. R. E. Telford, Rev. W. L. Barber, Rev. R. N. Abraham, and Rev. William Brock, of the Baptist Church.

He was buried in the church yard at Hebron, on a lot selected by himself, near the centre of the burying ground, where sleep the ashes of so many of those he loved so well. A modest granite shaft, so truly

typical of his character, marks his resting place. On it may be seen the words—

GROVES HARRISON CARTLEDGE.

Born February 15, 1820.

Ordained September 23, 1849.

Fell Asleep July 5, 1899.

Pastor of Hebron and Homer Churches forty-seven years.

Among his papers were found directions for his funeral services. From this we give the following extract:

"Let the twenty-third Psalm be read and commented upon. That has been my belief and my experience for nearly sixty years. In August, 1834, I took the Lord Jesus Christ to be my Lord and Saviour, and as my Shepherd he has led me, fed me, and kept me; and I have not wanted any good thing, not even chastisement and correction.

"He has often made me to lie down and repose in the green pastures of his love and grace. He has led me beside the gentle waters of his salvation, and I have drunk thereof with joy and gladness unspeakable.

"When I have been weary and worn, languishing and ready to halt and fail, he has restored, revived and strengthened my soul, and led me in the paths of righteousness, peace and duty—all in the name, and for the sake of him 'who loved me, and gave himself for me.'

"And now, with death in view, by his grace I can, and do say, 'Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.'

" 'Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.' At the Lord's table, with my head anointed with the unction of his Holy Spirit, I have feasted and communed with my blessed Saviour and his people, and my cup of joy and peace has often been full, even to overflowing.

"In faith and hope I have often said, and still do say, 'Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever'—in that upper temple, where my Saviour dwells, where I shall see him as he is, and through infinite mercy shall share his glory, world without end."

He also left this last message:

"As my last message to the people of my pastoral charge of Hebron and Homer, and also to the churches of Maysville, Thyatira, Jefferson, Harmony Grove, Carnesville, Hopewell, Royston, Harmony, Pleasant Hill, Hartwell, New Hope, Comer, Danielsville and Mt. Hermon, I would say, 'Remember the words which I spake unto you while I was yet with you.' I have preached unto you a precious Saviour, Jesus Christ the Lord, and now, in the prospect of a speedy death, he is unspeakably and gloriously precious to my soul.

"My only regret is that I have served him so feebly; that I have done and have suffered so little for him, who did and suffered so much for me. But notwithstanding all my sins and shortcomings, I am persuaded that 'he loved me, and gave himself for me,' and my heart cries out unceasingly—

"'Oh! for such love, let rocks and hills
Their lasting silence break;
And all harmonious human tongues
The Saviour's praises speak.'

"Let me beg you once more to love him more fervently, to trust him more implicitly, and to serve him more earnestly and faithfully. 'Fight the good fight of faith; lay hold on eternal life.' 'Run with patience the race set before you, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of your faith.'

"Meet me in heaven, and bring all your children with you. 'And may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost be with you all evermore. Amen.'"

# SERMONS AND DISCUSSIONS.

# THE DECREES OF GOD.

PERHAPS no subject has excited more controversy in the Christian church than this. The writer hopes to make some humble contribution to its elucidation. He believes that it is by no means impossible for all earnest and impartial seekers after truth to unite in accepting the doctrine of Divine Foreordination. Reason and revelation unite to establish its truth and utility. The objections urged against it are believed to be apparent, and not real.

If the reader will carefully and impartially consider the arguments and illustrations which follow, it is believed that he will arise from the perusal of this discussion, with his mind convinced, and his heart consenting to the truth that God has governed his universe, and performed all his works from the beginning, "according to his eternal purpose."

It is proper to say at the outset that the subject, being one of great magnitude and of far-reaching scope, must be viewed in many lights and from many different standpoints, just as vast mountains must be seen in order to obtain an adequate notion of their real size and proportions.

Furthermore, as the author cherishes the fond hope of affording instruction and edification to the unlearned, as well as to the learned, instead of

attempting a refined and elevated style, he will carefully study great plainness of speech.

"The decrees of God are his eternal purpose, according to the counsel of his will, whereby, for his own glory, he hath foreordained whatsoever comes to pass." This most excellent definition of the Shorter Catechism contains the following truths:

God's decrees are simply the purpose, or plan, by which he proposes to govern the universe.

This purpose is eternal.

It is all-comprehending, embracing, in its universal sweep, "whatsoever comes to pass."

In the formation of this purpose, God is influenced by no considerations external to himself—"according to the counsel of his will."

The end or aim of all is the highest and best that could be proposed, the manifestation of his own glory.

Is this doctrine true? Does God foreordain whatsoever comes to pass?

Let us first consider the argument from reason and common sense. Is it likely that an all-wise God would create a universe, without having formed a definite plan by which to govern it? For, be it remembered, God's decrees are the laws, or rules, which the divine Law-giver has laid down for the regulation of his own administration.

God has from all eternity determined what he will do, and what he will not do. Surely it will not be denied that Omniscience can determine just as wisely, before the foundation of the world, what he will do

in the future, as he could one minute beforehand. Men who look ahead, and try to lay plans for the future, are often under the necessity of waiting for future developments before deciding upon their course of conduct. And even after they have matured their plans to the best of their ability, oftentimes something unforeseen transpires, and throws their best laid plans into confusion.

But God, who sees the end from the beginning, is under no such necessity. Nothing can take him by surprise. No future event can mar his well laid plans. No circumstances, unforeseen by him, can arise to defeat his purposes.

When his eternal purposes were formed, the whole universe was spread out in the light of eternity before his all-seeing eyes. The heavens and the earth—angels, devils, men; all agents, animate and inanimate, rational and irrational; all causes and all effects, in every possible combination; in a word, every creature possible or conceivable was clearly seen and fully understood by the mind of the omniscient God. Every possible plan for the administration of the divine government was present before his eyes, and out of all those plans Eternal Wisdom chose that one upon which he has been administering his government ever since. He then determined to do what he has ever since been doing, and what he will continue to do forever.

The man who looks ahead, and forecasts the future as well as he can, and lays his plans in advance, and then carries out those plans as far as he is able, is

esteemed by us a wise and prudent man. Shall we, then, find fault with the great Creator for doing the same thing, when he does to perfection what the wisest man can only do imperfectly? He is a most foolish and improvident wretch who never looks ahead, who forms no plans for the future, and who never determines to-day what he will do on the morrow. And shall we dishonor and degrade the Most High by supposing that he belongs to this class of beings?

One of the kings of England, being asked if he could believe this doctrine of divine foreordination, replied, "I cannot help believing it, for I cannot degrade my Maker below the level of a wise man, by thinking that he acted without a plan." Verily, reason itself teaches that Jehovah formed his plan of government, and determined what he would do, and what he would not do, in the remotest period of a past eternity.

Let us now consider the argument from Scripture, and inasmuch as most of these passages will demand consideration further on, we will not consider them particularly at this point.

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory

of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved." (Eph. i. 3–6.)

"In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will; that we should be to the praise of his glory." (Eph. i. 11, 12.)

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified." (Rom. viii. 28–30.)

"Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." (Acts ii. 23.)

"For of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." (Acts iv. 27, 28.)

"And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord; and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed." (Acts xiii. 48.)

"But we are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation,

through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." (2 Thess. ii. 13.)

"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." (2 Tim. i. 9.)

"All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day. Therefore, said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father." (John vi. 37, 44, 65.)

"As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word. I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me." (John xvii. 2, 6, 9, 24.)

"And he said, I am Joseph your brother, whom ye sold into Egypt. Now, therefore, be not grieved, nor angry with yourselves, that ye sold me hither; for God did send me before you to preserve life." (Gen. xlv. 4, 5.) "But as for you, ye thought evil against me, but God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive." (Gen. l. 20.)

"Unto you, therefore, which believe he is precious; but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, and a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient; whereunto also they were appointed." (1 Peter ii. 7, 8.)

"For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ." (Jude 4.)

These passages, when carefully and impartially considered, prove, beyond all controversy, the doctrine of divine foreordination, as held by Presbyterians and many others throughout the world.

Let us now consider the argument from the foreknowledge of God. Although Arminians deny the doctrine of the divine decrees, they have, for the most part, admitted the fact of God's foreknowledge. They have said and sung for ages, "God can't decree and man be free." They maintain that if God has foreordained whatsoever comes to pass, then man and all other creatures are the subjects of irresistible and all-controlling fate, and cannot act otherwise than as their fate compels them. Arminians, therefore, boldly charge that Calvinism is fatalism; and that the doctrine of divine foreordination makes God the author of sin, and man the creature of fate—a mere machine, drawn and driven by some irresistible force without and above himself.

And yet the Arminian admits the divine foreknowledge. He affirms that God foreknows whatsoever comes to pass, but that he foreordains nothing; that he foreknows all future events, but that his foreknowledge does not cause anything to take place.

To the mind of the author, divine foreknowledge without divine foreordination involves us in greater difficulties than those which seem to flow from foreordination and foreknowledge taken together. If God *foreknows* all future events, then all future events *are fixed and certain*. An uncertainty is not the object of knowledge. God cannot foresee that which is, in its very nature, uncertain and contingent.

It is true that the omniscient God knows what would take place under any given circumstances, and from the operation of any supposed combination of causes, even though those circumstances may never be realized in fact, and those causes may never combine according to the supposition. This is true because God fully understands the nature of all possible causes, and the natural effects which would be produced by them in any supposed combination. And yet, at the same time, he may know that the supposed causes will never combine, and, therefore, that the supposed event will never come to pass. He certainly foresees that the event would take place, *if* certain causes should coöperate; but he also foresees that those causes will not thus coöperate, and hence he absolutely knows that no such event shall ever come to pass.

We have an illustration of this in 1 Samuel xxiii.

9–13. The Lord certainly knew what was in Saul's heart, and what also was in the hearts of the men of Keilah. He, therefore, knew that *if* David should remain in Keilah, Saul would seek to entrap him there. He also knew that *if* David should remain in Keilah, and *if* Saul should seek him there, the men of Keilah would deliver him up. But the Lord, at the same time, certainly foreknew that none of these things would take place, because he foresaw that the flight of David from Keilah would prevent the supposed combination of circumstances.

But to return from this digression. The point before us is this: The omniscient God foreknows all future events *as certainties,* things that surely will come to pass. This the Arminian admits. The conclusion, then, is irresistible, that all future events are fixed, and certain to take place. What God foreknows from eternity must certainly be realized in time. If God from eternity foreknew that he would create man, then man's creation was an absolute certainty. If God from eternity foreknew the sin and fall of man, then was it, from all eternity, an absolute certainty that man would sin and fall. The same may be said of every other event that ever has, or ever will come to pass, in all God's universe.

Now, says the Arminian, God did not foreordain any of these events; neither does his foreknowledge cause them to take place. Then we ask, *What does?* What rendered these things certain and fixed, so that, as such, God could foreknow them from all eternity? If God did not make them certain by his eternal

decree, then it follows that they were decreed by fate, and that God's acts, and the acts of all his creatures, have been eternally fated.

To recapitulate: God foreknows all things that ever come to pass. Therefore, all these things are fixed and certain. But, according to the Arminian, God did not foreordain them. Then there must be a higher power than God who did, and that power must be fate.

Hence, Arminianism is fatalism of the boldest and baldest type. It robs God and all his intelligent creatures of all freedom of will, and makes them mere foot-balls of inexorable destiny, to be tossed and kicked about, just as senseless and blind fate has determined from the most distant period of a past eternity. Alas! alas! the cautious Arminian, in his effort to steer wide of Scylla, has become engulfed in the whirlpool of Charybdis; in his attempt to disprove divine foreordination, he has swamped himself and his followers in the most hopeless fatalism.

The learned, but erratic commentator, Dr. Adam Clarke, had logical acumen enough to see that the admission of God's foreknowledge necessarily implied that all events were immutably fixed from eternity, and, therefore, to get rid of the difficulty, he flatly denied that God foreknew all things. According to Dr. Adam Clarke, God *is able* to foreknow all things, but *does not choose* to know all. Therefore, there are, and always have been, some things in the future of which God is ignorant, simply because he wishes to be ignorant.

But it would puzzle a wiser man than Dr. Clarke to explain how God, in ignorance of future events, could wisely choose which to foreknow and which not to foreknow. God *must know all events* before he can make an intelligent choice of those events of which he purposes to remain ignorant.

The foreknowledge of God is so clearly and fully taught in the Holy Scriptures that it is hardly necessary to cite particular passages in proof thereof.

If God does not foreknow all things that ever come to pass, then it follows that some things happen to his surprise; that he is constantly learning something new; that he knows much more now than he knew a thousand years ago, and a thousand years hence he will know much more than he knows now. Hence, God's understanding is not infinite, as the Scriptures affirm; he is not omniscient, and, therefore, not perfect. But God *is* perfect; his understanding *is* infinite; therefore, he foreknows all things, and all events fall out in time, just as he foresaw them from eternity.

Hence it must follow that all things were eternally predestined, or predetermined, by Jehovah, or by fate. But fate is a name without an existence; a cause which has only an imaginary being; the creation of some idle brain. There is no eternal being but God; for if there be two or more eternal beings, it will follow that there are two or more Gods, filling the same immensity, and inhabiting the same eternity. But there is one only, the living and true God, and the conclusion is irresistible that God has eternally and

unchangeably foreordained whatsoever comes to pass, and from eternity foreknows all things as fixed and certain, because he has made them certain in his eternal decree.

Let us now turn our attention to the objections which are urged against the doctrine under discussion; and here I promise the reader that I will not, after the manner of some commentators, dodge or skip over the hard places, and leave the real difficulties untouched. Having grappled with these difficulties myself, in my eager groping after light, I know just where they lie, and if I do not succeed in removing them, I will at least state them fairly, and meet them squarely.

How can God decree, and man be free? How can God unchangeably foreordain whatsoever comes to pass, without taking away the freedom, and hence the accountability of his creatures?

Our first answer to this objection is this: God has decreed that the creature *shall be free;* that he shall not be a mere machine driven by inexorable fate; that he shall choose and refuse for himself, in the untrammelled exercise of his own free will. Here, then, is one decree that does not interfere with the creature's freedom, but, on the contrary, secures and confirms it forever. God cannot contradict himself. No one decree can conflict with another. Hence, God cannot foreordain or decree anything that in the least interferes with the foreordained free agency of his creatures.

Our second answer to this objection is an appeal

to fact. Every man is *conscious that he is free.* The wicked men who crucified the Lord of glory were not forced or driven to the foul deed against their will; they acted freely, with no constraint or compulsion from without.

And yet the inspired Word declares that this very deed was predetermined by the Most High. On the day of Pentecost, the Apostle Peter said to these very men, whose hands were still red with the blood of their innocent victim, "Him [Jesus Christ] being delivered by the determinate [fixed] counsel [decree] and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and, with wicked hands, have crucified and slain." (Acts ii. 23.) And again, in Acts iv. 27, 28, it is said, "For of a truth, against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel [decree] determined before to be done."

If language means anything, these passages clearly and conclusively teach two things: first, that God foreordained the crucifixion of his Son, and, secondly, that these men, Jews and Gentiles, perpetrated the foul deed freely. Hence, when the Arminian says, "God cannot decree and man be free," we answer his objection with an emphatic denial, and point him to the case under consideration. Here *God did decree,* and yet *man was free.*

Nor is this the only instance of the kind. Take the case of Joseph. God purposed to send him into Egypt to store up the corn of the land against the

years of famine, in order that his chosen people might not perish. Here is the divine decree; and who will dare assert that Joseph's wicked brothers were not free when they sold him into Egypt? They did not even know of God's purpose. They acted solely in accordance with the dictates of their own wicked hearts. They hated their brother because he was the favorite son, and determined to put him out of the way.

They were conscious of their freedom and their responsibility, for when Joseph, still unknown to them, demanded that Benjamin be brought to Egypt, they said among themselves, "We are *verily guilty concerning our brother,* in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear; therefore is this distress come upon us." (Gen. xlii. 21.)

Joseph also recognizes their freedom, for he says, "As for you, ye thought evil against me, but God meant it for good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive." (Gen. l. 20.) Here, then, is another instance where *God did decree,* and yet *man was free.*

Another instance still, is the birth of Jesus. God had decreed that he should be born in Bethlehem. (Micah v. 2.) How shall this divine purpose be accomplished? For his parents, Joseph and Mary, live at Nazareth, nearly a hundred miles away. Just at this juncture, the Roman Emperor issued a decree "that all the world should be taxed," and that every one should go to the city of his fathers to be enrolled

for this purpose. This decree of the emperor brought Joseph and Mary to Bethlehem, "because they were of the house and lineage of David," and while there, Jesus was born. (Luke ii. 1–7.)

Now who shall say that Cæsar Augustus was not free when he issued that decree? What did he know of these two obscure Galileans, or of God's purpose concerning them? Throughout this whole transaction, he was acting solely in accordance with the dictates of his own heart, conscious of no constraint or compulsion from without. *God did decree,* and yet *man was free.*

Many other cases might be cited. God decreed that his chosen people should be carried into captivity, as a punishment for their sins. The Assyrian and Babylonian kings and armies were undoubtedly free in carrying out this divine purpose.

God decreed that, after seventy years of captivity, Judah should be restored to their own land. Cyrus, the Persian king, was undoubtedly free in granting permission, and in making provision for their return.

God decreed the destruction of Jerusalem, and the end of the Jewish nation. The Roman emperor and army were unquestionably free in destroying the city, in slaughtering vast numbers of the people, and in scattering the remnant to the four winds.

God decreed that his divine Son should die with the wicked, and be buried with the rich. The Jewish rulers and the Roman soldiers were perfectly free when they determined to crucify him between two thieves, and so was the rich man, Joseph of Arima-

thea, when, in love and gratitude, he buried his crucified Lord in his own new tomb.

But why multiply instances further? There is, in all the Word of God, nothing plainer than that *God does decree,* and that *man is free.*

If it be asked, *how* can these things be? we might say in reply, It is our duty as Christians to accept what the Bible teaches, whether we can understand it or not. Who understands the incarnation? Or the doctrine of the Trinity? And yet we accept these truths without question.

In like manner ought we to accept the truths of divine foreordination and human free agency, even though we may not be able to reconcile them, simply because *they both are taught in the Word of God,* our only infallible guide in matters of faith and practice.

The Arminian rejects the doctrine of the decrees, because it seems to be inconsistent with the known facts of human experience. On the same ground might he reject the blessed doctrine of the incarnation of the Son of God.

But while this is true, we believe that a flood of light is thrown upon this mysterious question by the following consideration: God's decrees are of two kinds, *efficacious* and *permissive.* The former embrace all those things that God determines to do through his own immediate agency, or through the agency of material causes; the latter include the voluntary acts of free agents other than God himself. Some things God determines to do; other things he determines merely to permit. The decree to create the world,

and the decree to send his Son to save the world, were efficacious. The decree to permit the fall of angels and of men was permissive.

With this distinction in mind, let us recur to the crucifixion of Christ, and see how it is possible for God to decree, and, at the same time, for man to be free. God decreed from all eternity to give his Son for the redemption of lost man. To accomplish this gracious purpose, it was necessary that that Son should die a cruel and shameful death. To die such a death, he must be crucified with wicked hands. How shall this purpose be carried out? God foresaw, from all eternity, what would be in the hearts and minds of these wicked Jews and Gentiles, and just how they would be disposed toward his Son, and seeing this, he determined that he would not restrain them, but would permit them to carry out the designs of their wicked hearts, and thus do willingly and freely what God had before determined should be done. In the same way, God decreed the fall of angels and of men, and the everlasting ruin of the finally impenitent.

Arminians still further object that if God foreordains whatsoever comes to pass, then it follows necessarily that God is the author of sin. The writer not long since heard an Arminian assert in the pulpit that if God foreordained the death of his Son, then he was a murderer.

In answer to this objection, we again appeal to the Word of God, and to the facts of human experience. In the Acts of the Apostles, as already seen, it is plainly declared that God decreed the death of his

Son, and yet the guilt of the Jews and Gentiles in carrying out that purpose is unmistakably asserted. "Him, being delivered by the determinate [fixed] counsel [or purpose] of God, ye have taken, and with *wicked hands* have crucified and slain."

So, also, in the case of Joseph. We are distinctly told that it was God's purpose to send him into Egypt; and yet his brethren, who carried out the divine decree, just as distinctly assert their responsibility and their sin. *"We are verily guilty,"* say they, "concerning our brother, in that we saw the anguish of his soul, when he besought us, and we would not hear." (Gen. xlii. 21.)

In both these cases, and in many others that might be cited, the Word of God itself declares that *God did decree,* and yet *was not the author of the sin.* And here we might rest the case, satisfied to believe what the Bible teaches, whether we can fully understand it or not. But in the hope of throwing additional light upon a confessedly dark subject, let us pursue the discussion a little further.

How could God decree the fall of man, and yet not be the author of man's sin? Before giving a definite answer to this question, let us ask another: Could not the Almighty have prevented the introduction of sin into this world? Or did sin enter, and death by sin, contrary to the will of God, and in spite of all his efforts to keep it out?

Surely we may affirm, without fear of contradiction, that God could have prevented the entrance of sin, if he had been disposed to do so. He is Almighty. His

resources are infinite. He might have refused to make the world and its inhabitants, and thus rendered the fall impossible; or, after creating the world, he might have so fortified man by his most efficacious grace, as we suppose he has done the unfallen angels, that sin could never have entered. In a thousand ways the almighty God could have prevented the entrance of sin into this world, and as he did not prevent it, we may safely conclude that he did not will to prevent it, and that it was his eternal purpose that our first parents should sin and fall.

We are now prepared to give a more direct answer to the question previously stated. When God determined, from a past eternity, to create man, and expose him to trial, with power to stand, but with liberty to fall, it became at once a certain truth to the mind of God that man would sin and fall. For wise purposes, God determined that he would not prevent it, but would permit man to sin in the exercise of his own freedom.

In this sense, God decreed man's sin and fall; *permissively,* as stated before, but nevertheless, certainly and unchangeably. Hence, God is not the author of the sin. His decree had no constraining power. Adam sinned freely, in the untrammelled exercise of his God-given freedom, never for a moment suspecting that the divine decree impelled him to sin.

If we closely follow the scriptural account of man's sin, we shall see that, although the event was fixed and certain to the mind of God, still there was no compulsion placed upon Adam's will or actions.

Paul tells us that the man was not deceived, but that the woman, being deceived, was in the transgression. (1 Tim. ii. 14.)

Now let us keep in view the fact that Adam, and not Eve, was the head and representative of his race, and that it was his sin, and not hers, that entailed sin and death upon all his posterity. After Eve had been beguiled into eating the forbidden fruit, had Adam refused to eat, she would have died, but sin and death would have ended in her. But when Adam saw that she had sinned, and must, therefore, die, the question arose, Shall I maintain mine integrity, refuse to eat, and live, but live without my well-beloved Eve, or shall I eat and sin with her, and with her die?

I doubt not that the nature of the act was distinctly present to his mind, and the issues of obedience on the one hand, and of disobedience on the other, were clearly seen by him at the time of his momentous trial. In his bosom two holy affections had been drawn into deadly conflict for the mastery. Hitherto he had been able to love and cleave to his wife, and, at the same time, to love God and his holy commands with an affection ardent and strong; but now, by the act of Eve, he is unwillingly brought to the point where he must resign either his wife or his God. But conjugal love triumphed, the creature was preferred to the Creator, and the awful consequences we know.

In all of this, we do not see the slightest suggestion of compulsion or constraint upon Adam's will. The choice was his, and the sin was his, although, in the

purpose of God, it was fixed and certain from all eternity.

If Adam had been created with a propensity to evil, or even with no propensities to either good or evil, there would have been some show of reason in charging his sin upon his Maker; but we are distinctly told that he was made in the image of God; and as all of God's dispositions are positively and actively inclined to the good and the true, it follows that Adam, created in the image of God, was originally free from all bent toward sin, and wholly and positively inclined toward holiness.

Indeed, it was a positively good passion that led him into sin. His love for his wife, a pure and holy flame, triumphed, as we have seen, over his love for God, and he deliberately determined to cleave to the wife of his bosom, even at the cost of parting company with his Maker. Previous to this sad moment, there had been in Adam's heart no taint of sin, no tendency to evil, no corruption of nature.

We have thus traced human sin back to its origin, in a passion in the bosom of our first father, which was originally holy and good.

But Adam's sin was not the first sin in the universe. The devil and his angels had sinned long before, and this old serpent was an active agent in drawing our first parents into disobedience. If we had a history of the fall of the angels, we should doubtless see that, although their fall was divinely foreordained in the same sense that Adam's was, yet they sinned freely, and were, therefore, solely responsible therefor.

Hence, the perplexing problem of the origin of sin and evil in the universe of a holy God—a problem that has puzzled the minds of philosophers and theologians for thousands of years—is seen to be not so very perplexing after all. For reasons known only to himself, God purposed from eternity to permit sin, and then to overrule it to the manifestation of his own glory, the highest and best possible end. Having formed that purpose, it was only necessary for him to determine to create man, and to expose him to a fair trial, in spotless purity, and in the exercise of untrammelled freedom, in order to render the fall absolutely certain.

Was it wrong for God to subject man to such a trial? What is *untried* virtue worth? Of what value is integrity, if it cannot resist temptation? Was it, then, not right for God to decree from eternity to subject the virtue and integrity of Adam to such a trial? Was it wrong for God to decree that he would permit Adam, in the exercise of his own freedom, to sin and fall? Did not the all-seeing mind of Jehovah, which understands at a glance all causes and all effects, well know just what would be the result of such a trial? Did he not, nevertheless, determine that he would create man, and expose him to the temptation?

Is it not true, then, that God did, to all intents and purposes, foreordain the sin and fall of man? And is it not equally true that man, notwithstanding God's decree, sinned most freely and most wickedly? Who, then, in view of all the facts in the case

can dare to say that God is the author of Adam's sin?

The Arminian still further objects to the doctrine of foreordination, because, in his view, it takes away from man all inducement to effort. Says the objector: If God has foreordained that I shall live to a certain age, and then die at a given time and place, I shall certainly live to that age, and then die, whether I use the means to preserve and prolong my life or not. Why then should I work to procure food and raiment? Why shun dangers? What use of taking medicine when sick? What God has foreordained must surely come to pass, regardless of effort on my part.

In like manner, if God has foreordained my salvation, I shall certainly be saved, whether I seek to be saved or not, and if he has decreed my damnation, I shall be damned, no matter what efforts I make to avoid it. Why then should I use the means of grace? Why should I give myself any concern about the matter? My efforts cannot alter God's decree. What is to be, will be, in spite of all my efforts to the contrary.

Such is the logic of Arminianism, and such, too, is the reasoning of Antinomianism; but how shallow the logic, and how vain the reasoning! If God has foreordained *whatsoever comes to pass,* then it necessarily follows that he has foreordained the use of means, and the putting forth of effort, for these are obviously a part of "whatsoever." If, therefore, he has foreordained that you shall live to be sixty years

old, he has also foreordained all the means necessary to accomplish that event. All the intervening steps, from your birth to your death, are embraced in God's immutable decree, and every one of those steps must be taken before you can reach the end.

In like manner, if God has decreed your salvation, he has also decreed the use of all the means necessary to bring it about. Every step on your way to heaven is marked out; just what God himself will do, just what you must do, just what your fellow-men must do; and every step must be taken; not one effort can be dispensed with. Neglect to use the means, fail to make the necessary efforts, and your damnation is sure, in spite of God's decree to the contrary.

But, in truth, you will not fail to use the necessary means. God has from eternity, not only decreed your salvation, and all the means necessary thereto, but has determined, by his grace, to make you able and willing to use these means; and it is, therefore, absolutely certain that you will "work out your salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." (Phil. ii. 12, 13.) "All that the Father giveth me *shall come to me.*" (John vi. 37.)

In the history of Paul's shipwreck (Acts xxvii. 22–32), we have a striking illustration of the inseparable connection which God has instituted between the means and the end. The Apostle tells his companions in the ship that God had sent his angel to tell him that though the ship should perish, there should be no loss of life.

Here we have a divine decree not only made, but revealed before the event took place; and yet, later on, when the sailors were about to desert the ship to save themselves by means of the long boat, Paul said to the centurion and to the soldiers, "Except these abide in the ship, ye cannot be saved." Then the soldiers cut the ropes, and let the boat fall off. The efforts of these sailors were necessary to save life, and these were embraced in God's decree.

Thus God has established an inseparable connection between the means and the end; all the necessary means are foreordained, as well as the end, and unless the means are used the end cannot be attained.

Therefore, let me assure you again, dear reader, that if God has foreordained your salvation, he has also unalterably connected together the means and the end, and you cannot be saved without employing the necessary means. Therefore, be up and doing. Gird up your loins. Watch and pray. Fight the good fight of faith; lay hold on eternal life. Be not weary in well doing. Mortify the deeds of the flesh, that you may live. Be thou faithful unto death, and thou shalt obtain a crown of life.

On the other hand, though God may have foreordained you to condemnation, you cannot perish, unless you willingly and unconstrainedly go on in the road that leads to ruin. Jude (vs. 4) declares, "For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of God into lasciviousness,

and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ."

Now, although these men were foreordained to this condemnation, yet by turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, and denying the Lord Jesus, and doing these things freely and willingly, they wrought out their own eternal ruin. Not forced and driven, like soulless machines, but acting freely, they took the road that conducted them to that condemnation to which God had before appointed them. No, dear reader, you cannot perish forever, unless you freely choose the broad way that leadeth to destruction.

As many serious minds find their sorest objections to Calvinism just at this point, I propose to elaborate the subject still further.

As the subject lies in my own mind, the truth is this: When God formed his purpose concerning the eternal destiny of man, he viewed the whole race as already fallen, and lost in sin and ruin. He foresaw that fallen man would in his heart be wholly inclined to evil, and if left to himself, and permitted to walk in his own way, would certainly continue in sin, and freely work out his own destruction. To prevent the whole race of mankind from voluntarily plunging themselves into remediless sin and ruin, God, in boundless love and mercy, elected a certain definite number of them in Christ, and predestinated them to salvation through the Redeemer, foreordaining, at the same time, all the means necessary to bring them to that glorious consummation.

At the same time, God decreed that he would pass

by the rest of mankind, and leave them in sin, to take their own course. Foreseeing that they would of themselves freely choose the way of wickedness, and of their own accord continue therein to the end, he foreordained them to everlasting condemnation.

When he thus predetermined that he would not convert them from the way of sin, but leave them to take their own chosen way, he rendered it absolutely certain that they would perish eternally; and, therefore, to all intents and purposes, foreordained them to eternal damnation, while, at the same time, they are the sole authors and procurers of their ruin. They sin freely, and without constraint, and are deeply conscious of the fact. They willingly persist in their evil ways, and know full well that they are not forced or impelled by any power from without.

According to this scriptural view of the subject, all who get home to heaven at last will be saved solely because a merciful God elected, or chose, them in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world; and in the execution of his eternal purpose to save, did in due time, by his grace, renew their hearts, and turn them from their wicked ways, and cause them to persevere in the way of faith and holiness to the end. "Whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified." (Rom. viii. 30.)

God by his grace begins, by his grace carries on, and by his grace completes their salvation. They work out their own salvation, because God, according to his eternal purpose, worketh in them both to will

and to do, of his good pleasure. They come to Christ in the beginning, because the Father "draws" them by his grace. (John vi. 44.) They persevere in grace, because they are "kept by the power of God." (1 Peter i. 5.) He who, by his grace, begins the work in their hearts, by his grace, carries on that blessed work till the day of the Lord Jesus. (Phil. i. 6.)

Hence do they ever give the glory of their salvation to God, the sole beginner and finisher thereof, singing with the Psalmist, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake," and with the poet—

"Grace first contrived the way
To save rebellious man;
And all the steps that grace display
Which drew the wondrous plan.

"Grace led my roving feet
To tread the heavenly road;
And new supplies each hour I meet
While pressing on to God.

"Grace all the work shall crown,
To everlasting days;
It lays in heaven the topmost stone,
And well deserves the praise."

But on the other hand, this view of the subject presents the finally impenitent before our minds as the sole authors of their sin and ruin. They sinned freely and willingly. Of their own accord, they persisted in sin to the end, and they are lost because they thus sinned. God is not the author of their sin. He found them in sin. In inscrutable wisdom he

saw fit to leave them in sin, and in infinite justice, appointed them to eternal wrath because of their sin.

Who can blame the Lord for saving his elect? Not one. Who can charge him with injustice in not saving the non-elect? He saved none of the fallen angels; and all agree that he was just in leaving them in the sin which they had chosen, and in the awful ruin into which they had willingly plunged. Had he left the whole race of man in sin and misery, too, who could have blamed him for such righteous retribution?

When a righteous God, in holy vengeance, leaves *some* to perish in voluntary sin, does he do a worse thing than if he had left *all* thus to perish? Is the everlasting misery of *a part* a greater evil than would have been the endless ruin of *the whole?* If we could not charge God with injustice in condemning *all,* who dares to bring such an accusation against him for condemning *some?*

If God saves a part of the race, the salvation of that part is an exhibition of boundless mercy and grace, and if he leaves a part to perish, he deals with them in simple justice, as he might have justly done to all, by inflicting upon them that miserable doom, which they, by their sin and rebellion, have fully deserved.

This brings us to another objection. This doctrine of the decrees, according to the objector, makes God partial, in that it represents him as doing more for some of his creatures than for others. If he had left

all to perish, it would have been but just. But your doctrine represents him as leaving some, and saving others; and not because of anything in them prompting him thereto, but solely because of his own good pleasure. This is not fair. "God is no respecter of persons"; he must treat every man alike; he must give all an equal chance.

It is true, as the Scriptures declare, that "God is no respecter of persons"; but what does this statement mean? That he treats all his creatures exactly alike? This is not true, as we shall see later on.

The meaning evidently is this: God selects his chosen ones from the high and the low, the rich and the poor, the white and the black, the bond and the free, the Gentile and the Jew. This was the confession of Peter, a bigoted Jew, who had hitherto supposed that the mission of the Messiah would begin and end with his own nation. On the housetop at Joppa he begins to realize his mistake, and in the home of the Roman centurion his eyes are fully opened, as he sees God's Spirit falling upon Gentiles just as he had previously fallen upon the Jews. Under these circumstances, he makes this memorable confession, that God's blessings are for Gentiles as well as Jews, that he is no respecter of persons, "but *in every nation,* he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted of him."

When it is objected that our doctrine represents God as doing more for some of his creatures than for others, we admit the charge. It is true.

God has made some mere creatures of a day, sport-

ing in his genial sunshine from morn till eve, and then passing away forever. To others he has given an existence which will run on and on forever, commensurate with his own eternal ages.

Some have been doomed to creep and crawl prone upon the ground, while others have been made to walk upright in the image of their Maker.

To some God has given the spirit of the beast that goeth downward, and to others the spirit of man that ascendeth upward. He has made some rational and others irrational.

Vain man, will you charge your Creator with folly and partiality? Art thou wiser than he, who knoweth all things? Art thou more benevolent than he, whose eternal bosom is the fountain head of love and kindness? Art thou more just than he, whose throne is founded on eternal justice, and who from everlasting to everlasting doeth all things well? Know, then, proud man, that our God is sovereign, absolute throughout all his universal realm, and rightfully doeth whatsoever pleaseth him.

If we confine our view to God's immortal creatures, we find that he has made some of them men, some seraphim and cherubim, some angels, and one, at least, archangel. Has not the Creator of all done more for the archangel than for the angels? Has he not done more for angels than for men?

If we narrow our view still further, and look only at our own race, do we not see at a glance that God has done far more for some men than for others? In point of intellect, some are born idiots, some with

ordinary minds, and some with the highest endowments of genius.

If we look at their bodies, some are born misshapen and deformed; others well formed, and complete in all their parts. Some have by nature sickly bodies and feeble constitutions, and live in suffering and pain from the cradle to the grave, while others are blessed with healthly bodies and vigorous constitutions, and live and die almost exempt from sickness and suffering.

Some are born to wealth, to high social position, with every opportunity for improvement and happiness, while others are born in poverty, cradled in filth and squalor, and doomed to live and die in ignorance, wretchedness and want.

Some are born white and some black, some yellow and some brown. Some are born free, and others slaves. Some are born princes, nobles, or kings; others subjects, peasants and serfs. Some are born in civilized and Christian lands, while others live and die in the dismal darkness of heathendom.

Jefferson wrote the miserable falsehood, "All men are created free and equal," and though it has been sung and shouted by foolish millions since, it remains a miserable falsehood still. From Abraham's day to the present hour there have been, in every generation, many human beings who were born in bondage, and have lived and died in abject slavery. Neither has it ever been true that all men in any age were born equal, either physically, mentally, socially or politically.

Nay, verily! Proud, but foolish skeptic, short-sighted caviller, know thou that the Almighty doth not work after thy pattern, nor shape and mould his creatures according to thy model.

It is thus clearly seen that God does do more for some than for others, in respect to natural endowments and temporal advantages; and who will dare to find fault? May not the infinite God do as he pleases with his own? "Hath not the potter power over the clay, to make of the same lump one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?" (Rom. ix. 21.) And if Jehovah bestows greater natural and temporal advantages upon some than upon others, may he not rightfully make a difference between them in regard to moral and spiritual blessings?

Of course, God cannot do wrong. Even the absolute and sovereign Creator of all cannot be unjust. But is he unjust in punishing the wicked? Do they not richly deserve it?

"But he must give every man an equal chance." By what law? Of works? Who deserves anything good at the hand of God? He is under no obligation to give any man a chance of salvation. If he chooses to save some, their salvation is wholly an exercise of divine mercy; and if he does not choose to save others, they manifestly receive only their just deserts.

If the objector still insists that God must not make a difference between creatures equally deserving, he is silenced from every corner of the earth by *the undisputed fact that God does make a difference.* Calvinism accepts the fact, and maintains that the

absolute God *has the right to discriminate,* so long as he is not unjust to any.

Another objection which presses upon many serious minds, and prejudices them against the doctrine of the divine decrees, is the seeming inconsistency between this doctrine and the freeness and universality of the gospel offer. If God has predetermined to save only the elect, how can he sincerely extend the gospel invitation to all? God is sincere, from the very necessity of his nature, and it cannot be true that he purposes to save some, and to pass by others, whom he, nevertheless, invites to the gospel feast.

Our first answer to this objection is this: As a matter of history, millions upon millions of human beings have lived and died in the most dismal darkness of heathenism, without ever having heard the first invitation of divine mercy, knowing no gospel, visited by no Saviour, and understanding no way of salvation. They have had the light of nature, of reason, and of conscience; against this law written upon their hearts they have sinned, and by this law will they be judged.

It is not true, then, as a matter of fact, that the gospel invitation has been either universal or general. Some may cavil at the fact. Self-conceited man may presume to dictate to the All-mighty and the All-wise, and tell him what he ought to do, and what he ought not to do, but our business is with the facts of God's administration; and the fact is patent, on the very surface of history, that the gospel has not been offered to all mankind, in every age, and in every clime.

But if we narrow our view, and consider only Christian lands, the difficulty returns with full force. If God has determined to save only some of those who hear the gospel, how can he sincerely offer salvation to all?

We answer: When God decreed that his Son should make an atonement for the sins of his elect, he well knew that, from its very nature, that atonement would be of infinite value; that it would be just as complete a satisfaction for the sins of all mankind as it would be for the sins of one man. The infinite Godhead, united with the spotless manhood in the person of Jesus Christ, could not provide less than an all-sufficient atonement. On the basis of such a satisfaction, the Father predetermined that wherever his heralds should go, he would give, in all honesty and sincerity, a general and promiscuous offer; that he would place no hindrance in any man's way, and that he would justify and save all who would accept his overtures of mercy.

But at the same time, foreseeing that no man, if left to himself, would accept the invitation, but that all would, with one consent, begin to make excuse, and stay away and die, God, in boundless mercy, determined to regenerate a certain definite number of them, and thus make them both able and willing to accept Christ the Lord as their Redeemer.

All the rest he determined to leave just as he found them, to plead their vain excuses, to go their own way, and bring down eternal wrath and misery upon themselves. Their sin, and not God's decree, is the

sole cause of their ruin. The atonement is all-sufficient, and altogether satisfactory to a sinless God, but not acceptable and satisfactory to those most miserable sinners, those blind and stupid cavillers, those slaves to lust, led captive by the devil at his will. God is propitiated toward them, and entirely willing to be at peace; he sincerely invites them to be reconciled to him and live, but since they will not be reconciled on his just and easy terms, he has sworn that they shall not enter into his rest.

According to this view of the subject, God had a double design in providing an atonement for sin. His first and special design was to provide a plan by which he could be just, and yet justify and save the elect; and his second and general design was to furnish a basis upon which he could sincerely offer salvation to mankind generally and promiscuously.

God's decrees are the rules which he has adopted for directing and shaping his own actions. For the regulation of human conduct, he has given us the moral law, and the precepts of the gospel. His eternal decrees are not, therefore, rules of conduct for us, but are rather the laws by which he has determined to govern his own most holy doings. When, therefore, he does anything, he is simply acting out his eternal purpose; and if we wish to know what were his decrees in eternity, we have but to look at his actions in time. He saves some, and does not save others, and hence we may wisely infer that he always intended to save the one class, and not to save the other. He says in his Word, "Look unto me, all

ye ends of the earth, and be ye saved," and we may justly infer that he is sincere; that he is able and willing to save all who will look; that he always intended to provide a basis in the gospel of his Son, upon which he could honestly and sincerely extend to all this cordial invitation.

Hence, if the writer could lift up his voice, and sound it out from east to west, and from north to south, he would say, in the name of the Lord Jesus, to every perishing son and daughter of Adam: "Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved"; "The Spirit and the Bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." All are invited. There is no obstacle in your way, except that which exists in your own heart. If you belong to the class of the non-elect, God's decree is not in your way. He has simply decreed that he will invite you, and then leave you to come or to stay away, as you may freely choose. He has not decreed that you shall not come, but only that he will not bring you; and foreseeing that you will, of your own choice, refuse to come, he has, from all eternity, determined to punish you for your sins.

According to this doctrine, the salvation of the elect is absolutely certain, and hence their condition is infinitely better than it could have been without election. At the same time, their election does not in the least prejudice the condition of the non-elect. They stand now just where the whole race would

have stood had God elected none. This doctrine does not, therefore, make anybody's condition more hopeless than it was before, while the condition of the unnumbered multitudes of the elect is infinitely safer, and better every way than it could ever have been otherwise. We need not be surprised, therefore, that the inspired Apostle found in this doctrine matter for fervent gratitude and praise. As he said to the Thessalonians, "We are bound to give thanks alway to God for you, brethren beloved of the Lord, because God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit, and belief of the truth." (2 Thess. ii. 13.)

But none can ever know in this life that he belongs to the class of the non-elect. And inasmuch as a merciful God invites all who hear the gospel's joyful sound to look unto him and be saved, and knowing that all his invitations are most cordial and sincere, it becomes the duty and the privilege of every one to strive to enter in at the strait gate, and to give all diligence to make his calling and election sure.

Every possible objection that can be urged against the divine decrees can be urged with equal force against the divine acts. The decrees are simply the plan according to which God determined from eternity to shape and control the affairs of the universe. What God has been doing, efficaciously or permissively, in time, he determined to do before the foundation of the world. Now, if God's administration of his government has been righteous, was not his previous purpose thus to administer it righteous,

too? If it is right for God to do what he has been doing, was it not also right for him to decree beforehand that he would thus do? Can the act be right, and yet the previous purpose to do the act wrong?

Let us apply this truth to particular cases:

God made the devil and his angels holy, with no corruption of nature, and with no tendency to sin; able to maintain their integrity, but with freedom to fall. He placed them in a state of probation, and when they abused their liberty, he suffered them to sin and fall. Now we ask, was it right for him to create them holy, and was it wrong for him in eternity to decree that he would thus create them? Was the act right, and the purpose wrong? Was it right for him to put them on trial, and was it wrong for him to decree in eternity that he would thus try them? Was it right for him to permit them to sin and fall, and was it wrong for him from all eternity to decree that he would thus permit their sin and fall? If the act itself was right, the eternal purpose was right, too. The act cannot be right, and the previous purpose wrong. Therefore, until we are prepared to challenge the righteousness of God's acts, let us beware how we presume to criticise the righteousness of God's decrees.

Apply the same line of thought to the case of our first parents. If it was right for God to create them as he did, could his eternal purpose thus to create them have been wrong? If it was right to put them in a trying, but fair state of probation, could his purpose thus to try them have been wrong? If it was

right for him to permit them to sin and fall, could his purpose thus to permit their sin and fall have been wrong? If the act was right, the purpose to perform the act could not be wrong. And if the Arminian holds that God's decree to permit the fall was an unrighteous decree, he must also maintain that God's act in permitting the fall was an unrighteous act.

Take another case. For ages past the Almighty has been suffering evil spirits and wicked men to sin in the exercise of their own untrammelled freedom, and thus to pluck down Jehovah's wrath upon their own immortal souls. Even in gospel lands, he has left millions in their sins, to reject Christ, to scoff at religion, to harden their hearts, to grieve away the Holy Spirit, to die and perish forever. Is it right for God to do these things, and was it wrong for him from eternity to determine that he would thus do? Is the act right, and the purpose wrong?

These cases, which might be multiplied indefinitely, are sufficient to evince the truth of the statement, that every objection that is urged against the divine decrees can be urged with equal force against the divine acts. If we admit that God's acts are righteous, we must also admit that his purposes are righteous. The objections prove too much, and, therefore, prove nothing; for if we object to God's decrees, we can, on the same grounds, object to God's acts.

The author now proposes to show that without the election of grace, no man would be saved, even though the atonement of Christ is all-sufficient. In John vi. 44, the Lord Jesus declares, "No man can come to

me except the Father, which sent me, draw him." Christ cannot save the man who does not come to him. No man can come to Christ until he is drawn by the Father's grace. The Father cannot, and will not, draw the man to Christ without intending to do so. If he does actually draw him, it must be because of a previous purpose to that effect, and that previous purpose, even though it were formed only one moment beforehand, is a predestination, a foreordination.

But it will not be denied that the all-wise, the all-seeing God could form his purposes just as wisely in eternity as in time; and, as a matter of fact, the Scriptures clearly teach that God's purposes were formed from all eternity. "God hath, *from the beginning*, chosen you to salvation" (2 Thess. ii. 13). "According as he hath chosen us in him, *before the foundation of the world*" (Eph. i. 4).

Therefore, since no man can be saved who does not come to Christ, since no man can come until he is drawn by the Father, since the Father will not draw any man without a previous purpose to do so, and since the Scriptures declare that the Father's purposes are formed from eternity, it inevitably follows that no man could be saved, if God had not, before the foundation of the world, chosen him to salvation.

Therefore, instead of criticising the doctrine of election, and rejecting it as a "horrible doctrine," utterly inconsistent with the character of a loving and merciful God, let us rather give thanks, with the

Apostle, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world." All our spiritual blessings are here traced back to God's eternal purpose. He gives us his Son, and his Holy Spirit; he renews our hearts, forgives our sins, delivers us from hell, and takes us home to heaven in the end, all because, from all eternity, he chose us to salvation in Jesus Christ. Well may we give thanks to God, for without his eternal purpose of grace we must forever have perished in our sins.

Arminians sometimes say that, while Calvinism makes the salvation of the elect certain, and the salvation of the non-elect impossible, Arminianism makes the salvation of all men possible. But, according to the teaching of the Word of God, the true statement is this: Calvinism makes the salvation of the elect certain, and does not make the salvation of the non-elect one whit more impossible than it was already; while Arminianism makes the salvation of all men impossible. Let us, then, give thanks to God for Calvinism, and rejoice that he does not work, even among Arminians, according to the Arminian plan.

Let us now examine the doctrine of election, as held by Arminians. The Bible is so full of the subject that Arminians, as well as Calvinists, are compelled to believe in election; but not in the same kind of election. According to some of them, "believers, and believers only, are the elect. As soon as a man

believes, the Lord elects him to eternal life." According to this view of the matter, the sinner chooses Christ first, and then God elects or chooses him.

But Christ says to his disciples (John xv. 16), "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit." His choice came first. He chose them, not because they had chosen him, and had begun already to bear the fruits of faith and holiness, but in order that they might bring forth these fruits. Had he not chosen them, they never would have chosen him.

Furthermore, this view is contradicted by the Scriptures already quoted, which declare that God's people are chosen "before the foundation of the world." Not when they believe, but long before they believe. Not in time, but from all eternity.

According to the commonly accepted view among Arminians, the election of God is based upon his foreknowledge. He sees the end from the beginning, and from all eternity he knows just who will believe and repent, and presevere in holiness and good works to the end; and on the ground of this foreseen faith, holiness, etc., God elects these to eternal life.

This view is based upon the following texts: "For whom he did foreknow, them he also did predestinate," etc. (Rom. viii. 29.) "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God." (1 Peter i. 2.)

It is claimed that these passages teach that God's foreordination is conditioned upon his foreknowledge, that he knows, from all eternity, who will accept the atonement of his Son, and persevere in faith and

holiness to the end, and on this ground he has chosen them to salvation.

We reply, in the first place: Even admitting that the words, "foreknow" and "foreknowledge" have here their usual meaning, the Arminian still fails to establish his claim; for it will be necessary for him to add words that the Apostle never used, and to introduce thoughts of his own that were never in the sacred writer's mind; such words and thoughts as these: "Whom he did foreknow" *as believing and penitent;* or, "elect according to God's foreknowledge" *of their holiness and good works, and their perseverance therein to the end.*

In the second place, the words "to know" and "to foreknow," "knowledge" and "foreknowledge" do not always denote simple cognition. Witness the following texts: "The Lord knoweth the way of the righteous, but the way of the ungodly shall perish" (Psa. i. 6). "Then will I profess unto them, I never knew you; depart from me, ye that work iniquity" (Matt. vii. 23). "The Lord knoweth them that are his" (2 Tim. ii. 19). "You only have I known of all the families of the earth" (Amos iii. 2).

In all these passages, and in others that might have been cited, the word manifestly denotes far more than mere cognition. Cognition is included, of course, but with the additional idea of affection and esteem.

Not only so, but the same Greek word here translated "foreknow" is, in 1 Peter i. 20, translated "foreordained," "Who verily [that is, Christ] was foreordained before the foundation of the world,"

The Apostle's meaning, then, might be reverently paraphrased thus: "Elect according to the gracious purpose of God the Father," and, "For whom he did choose as the objects of his peculiar love, these he did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." The correctness of this interpretation will be seen more clearly as we proceed.

In the third place, according to the Arminian view, election is of no consequence whatever, and becomes wholly insignificant in the gospel scheme. The Bible says, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" (Acts xvi. 31). Now if God elects a man on the ground of his foreseen faith, he elects one whom he foresees to be in a saved condition already. *Why elect him?* What does election do for him? If God foreknows him as a believer, he foreknows him as already saved, and election is absolutely worthless. Why then do the Scriptures say anything about it? Why introduce the subject at all? Why especially speak of it in language of adoration and praise? It does not secure our salvation. It views us as already believing, and therefore already saved. We would, therefore, be saved without it, and it is of no consequence whatever. On this theory, it is utterly impossible to explain the prominence given it in the Word of God.

But when we regard the eternal purpose of God as the fountain head of all our mercies, as Calvinism does; when we remember that God sent his Son into the world, that he gives us his Spirit to renew our hearts, that he gives us faith, repentance and love,

and enables us to persevere in the way of life to the end, all because of his eternal purpose to save us, we can easily understand the emphasis placed upon this doctrine in God's Holy Word, and are ready to cry out with the Apostle, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world." (Eph. i. 3, 4.)

In the fourth place, this view of election is expressly contradicted by the Word of God. Take the passage just quoted, "According as he hath chosen us in him, before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." (Eph. i. 4, 5.)

Here the inspired Apostle declares that God chose us, not because he foresaw us as holy and without blame, as the Arminian affirms, but in order that we should be holy and without blame. He predestinated us, not because he foresaw us children already by faith in Jesus Christ, but in order that he might make us children, "having predestinated us *unto* the adoption of children." Our holiness was not the ground of God's choice. He chose us in order that we might be holy. We never could have been holy, and God never could have foreseen us as holy, had he not previously chosen us, and determined to make us holy. We are not predestinated because God foresees us as children already, but in order that we might

become children. We do, in time, become the children of God, because our Father, in the execution of his eternal purpose, makes us children by regeneration and adoption; and we never would have become God's children had he not from all eternity chosen us, and determined to make us children.

Consider Rom. viii. 29, "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." God predestinates, not because he foresees us already conformed to the image of his Son, but in order that we should be conformed to that holy image. Our conformity to Christ's image is the result of our predestination, not the ground, and we never would have been thus conformed had not God, from all eternity, chosen us, and determined to fashion us anew, after the blessed image of his holy Son.

Consider 1 Peter i. 2, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." We are not elected because of foreseen faith and holiness, but our faith and sanctification are the divinely appointed channel, through which the aim of election shall be accomplished. We are chosen to salvation, not because God from eternity foresaw us obedient and holy through the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ, but, on the contrary, we are elected to obedience and holiness, and we never would have been obedient and holy had not God previously chosen us, and determined, by his grace, to bring us to obedience and holiness.

Consider Rom. ix. 11, 12, "For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth, it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger." In Rom. xi. 5, we read, "Even so at this present time also, there is a remnant according to the election of grace." Combining these two passages, what could be clearer than this, that election is not of works, but of grace?

But if the Arminian view is correct, and God elects us on the ground of foreseen faith, holiness and obedience, then it follows necessarily that election is of works, and not of grace. The truth is, Arminianism speaks one language, and the Bible another, and before the truth of Arminianism can be established much of the Bible will have to be re-written.

From all that has been said, it is undoubtedly true that our election is not founded upon foreseen faith and holiness, as the Arminian claims, but, on the contrary, our faith, our holiness, and our good works are all the result of our eternal election of God.

On what, then, is election based? Why does God choose one and not another? We frankly confess, *we do not know.* This is one of the "secret things" that "belong to God." Doubtless he had a good and sufficient reason for making a difference, but he has not seen fit to make it known. Some day, perhaps, we shall understand; but for the present we must be content to believe and adore.

All that the Scriptures teach us upon this subject

is just this: *The ground of election is not in us, but in God.* We are chosen to salvation, not because of any foreseen good in us, but solely because of God's own good pleasure. "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, *according to the good pleasure of his will*" (Eph. i. 5). "Being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will" (Eph. i. 11). "That the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth" (Rom. ix. 11). "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion upon whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that showeth mercy" (Rom. ix. 15, 16).

This is all that God has thought good to reveal, and with this we must be content. So that our only answer to the question, why God chooses one and passes by another, is simply this, "Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight." (Matt. xi. 26.)

At this point, it may be well to examine the Arminian doctrine of "Sufficient Grace." This term was one of the bones of contention between the Arminian Jesuits and the Calvinistic Jansenists; and if any of my readers wish to see how the Jesuits, by the use of this phrase, "darkened counsel by words without knowledge," they may consult Pascal's celebrated Provincial Letters to the Jesuit fathers. According to this doctrine, God gives to all men sufficient grace, and then leaves them to improve that grace and be saved, or to abuse it and perish.

What is sufficient grace? "Grace" is that which saves us. Grace is the divine mercy which pardons our sins, and the divine power which convicts us, and renews and sanctifies our souls. "Sufficient," according to Webster, is "enough; equal to the end proposed; adequate to wants." Sufficient grace, then, is enough grace; grace equal to the end proposed; grace adequate to the sinner's needs.

Is it true that God gives to all men sufficient grace? Grace equal to the end proposed? Grace adequate to the sinner's needs? If so, then surely all men are saved, and this is the end of the matter. But, alas! all men are not saved. Multitudes miserably perish, in spite of God's grace; and the claim of the Arminian, that God gives sufficient grace to all men, is not true.

But the Arminian will doubtless reply, My meaning is that God gives to all sufficient grace to render them inexcusable. This proposition, however, implies that man without this grace would have a good excuse for his sin and unbelief; that a certain portion of grace is due the sinner, and may be demanded by him as his right. But is this true? Does not the very word "grace" utterly and forever exclude all idea of debt or obligation? Is not the sinner entirely inexcusable without any grace at all? Such a claim is a gross insult to a merciful God, and an unspeakable outrage upon all just conceptions of divine mercy and grace.

But the Arminian, still unwilling to surrender his favorite expression, may reply again, By sufficient

grace I mean grace enough to enable the sinner to believe and repent, if he would.

Ah! yes, *if he would.* But there lies the difficulty. The sinner could repent without any grace at all, *if he would.* Without any grace he could believe, if he would. Without any grace he could love and serve God, if he would. *But, alas! he won't.* Here is the obstacle, *in his will,* and only almighty grace can remove it. How can the sinner act against his own settled purpose? How can he do that against which his will rebels? How can he, then, believe and repent, while his obstinate and perverse will is utterly and altogether opposed to faith and repentance? He has a mind, and a heart. He has judgment, perception, reason, memory, conscience, affections and will—all the necessary faculties required in the exercises of believing and repenting. But that obstinate will, and those corrupt and perverted affections, do not choose to repent and believe, and they never will so choose, until the heart shall have been renewed by divine grace.

The vulture could quit feasting on putrid flesh, *if he would.* Man could eat the vulture's chosen food, *if he would.* The lion could stop feeding upon his warm and bleeding prey, *if he would.* The serpent could cease to thrust out his forked tongue, and to bite with poisonous fangs, *if he would. It is the nature* of the vulture to feed upon rotting flesh. It is the nature of the lordly lion to roar, and to tear in pieces his bleeding victim. It is the nature of the serpent to bite with venomous fangs; and they will

all continue to do so, until their natures shall have been changed. In like manner, it is the nature of fallen man to sin, to abuse and reject the overtures of mercy, and he will continue to do so, until divine grace shall have radically changed his nature, and made him a new man in Christ Jesus.

The grace which works this great change in the heart and will, which makes the sinner a new man, willing to repent and believe the gospel, is surely sufficient grace, grace adequate to the sinner's needs, grace equal to the end proposed, the soul's salvation. *But this is regenerating grace;* and less than this is not enough, for it leaves the man a sinner, and an unbeliever still. Less than this is not equal to the end proposed, and is practically useless, for it leaves the man a daring rebel against God, and a wicked rejector of divine mercy. Less than this is not adequate to the sinner's needs, for he needs grace enough to change him from a sinner to a saint, from a child of the devil to a child of God.

The first great, pressing, crying need of fallen man is a new heart and a right spirit, and until he shall have received that new heart and that right spirit, he will persist in going astray, like a lost sheep; will continue to turn to his own wicked way, in spite of the gracious calls of divine mercy. Can the unrenewed heart put forth the holy acts of faith and love? Can the unregenerate and depraved soul exercise the holy emotions of godly sorrow that worketh repentance unto salvation? Yes, it may, assuredly, when the bitter fountain shall send forth sweet water, when

the thorn bush shall bear figs, when the Ethiopian shall change his skin, and the leopard shall alter his spots. But until then, never.

Ezekiel might have stood in the valley till this day, prophesying to the dry bones, and still have seen no life or motion among them, had not almighty power exerted itself in moving bone to bone, in causing sinews and flesh to grow upon them, and breath to come into their nostrils from the origin and source of life.

And if I could cause my voice to be heard all round this sin-cursed globe, I would stand and cry to all mankind, O ye wretched sinners, lost and ruined by the fall, dead in trespasses and sins, your first and greatest need is a new heart. You can never be justified and have peace with God until you believe. But faith is the gift of God. Unless you repent, you must all likewise perish. But Christ alone is "exalted to give repentance." Unless you love the Lord Jesus Christ, you shall be anathema. But with your wicked and impenitent hearts you cannot love the Lord; and he alone can change those stony hearts, and give you hearts of flesh. Hence it is absolutely certain that you must die in sin and perish evermore, unless a gracious God shall shed his Holy Spirit on you, and renew your hearts, and thus make you willing and able to repent and believe the gospel.

Therefore, O ye perishing and most miserable sinners, prostrate yourselves before the absolute, but most gracious Lord of all, and cry, "O Lord, I am oppressed; undertake for me." "Have mercy upon

me, O God, according to thy loving-kindness; according to the multitude of thy tender mercies, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin; for I acknowledge my transgression, and my sin is ever before me. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me."

Thus, with earnest and importunate supplications, with strong crying and tears, offer up your desires to God, if so be that he may have mercy upon you, and save your soul. For your encouragement he has said, "Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me." (Psalm l. 15.)

To my brethren in the ministry I would say, My beloved brethren, you may spend all your days in preaching the Word of God, and may wear yourselves out in warning sinners to flee from the wrath to come, but all will be in vain, unless the almighty Spirit shall breathe the breath of spiritual life into dead souls, and cause them to live.

Therefore, my brethren, before you enter the pulpit, while standing as God's messenger before your people, and when your message has been spoken, let your earnest desires, your most importunate prayers constantly ascend before the throne that the Lord himself would save miserable sinners, "by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost."

On the other hand, my dear brethren, do not be discouraged because you may not be learned, eloquent or persuasive, nor because sinners are so blind, foolish and hardened. Remember that it is not your learning nor your eloquence, but divine grace that saves. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts" (Zech. iv. 6). And that divine Spirit can easily overcome and remove all their blindness and hardness, and cause them to live.

I know your disappointments and your trials. When you see how blind and dead men are, when you hear the scoffs and jeers of the worldling and the skeptic, and when you perceive that your strongest arguments, your most winning invitations, and your most pungent and persuasive appeals, fall powerless upon their hearts, and rebound, ineffectual as the arrow shot against a wall of stone, you are tempted to cry out in anguish of spirit, "Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed?" "O that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears, that I might weep day and night over the sins of my people!" Alas! my strength is spent for naught, and my days are passed in useless toil.

At such a time, beloved brethren, rest your aching hearts upon the glorious doctrine of the divine decrees. Remember that God the Father hath given to his Son an innumerable host to be his own peculiar people, and that *all* that the Father hath given him *shall* come to him. Christ, therefore, did not die in vain, and your preaching is not in vain.

When Paul and Barnabas preached at Antioch, "as many as were ordained to eternal life, believed" (Acts xiii. 48). So shall it ever be. God has a people in every gospel community. He has decreed their salvation from all eternity, and will not repent. They shall be saved; they must be saved, to the very last and least of them all. No wanderer shall be lost. The whole family shall be gathered home to the Father's house. Therefore, preach on, and preach ever. Pray on, and pray ever, and know that your labor is not in vain. "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him" (Psalm cxxvi. 6).

This doctrine is not only full of encouragement and comfort to the faithful preacher, but also, without doubt, afforded encouragement and support to the Son of God himself during his dreadful agonies in Gethsemane, and his excruciating pangs upon the cross; for this doctrine being true, he well knew that his sufferings and death were not in vain. He did not come into this world upon a mission of uncertainties and peradventures. He ran no risks, and engaged in no game of chance. His Father had given him a people from all eternity. All these, in due time, "*shall* come to me," "drawn" by the same love and grace that gave them in the beginning. Thus, "he *shall* see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied" (Isa. liii. 11). For these, in particular, he died; for these he prayed, and not for the world; every one of these shall he keep, not one shall perish,

and with these shall he present himself before the Father, and say, "Behold, I and the children thou gavest me!"

This doctrine exalts God, and humbles man; tracing all our mercies to the sovereign grace of him, who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will; teaching the sinner his utter helplessness, and his absolute dependence upon divine mercy, and thus moving him to fall at the foot of the cross, and cry, "God be merciful to me, a sinner."

To the Christian heart what a cheering and delightful doctrine! He can truly say, "My Father hath loved me with an everlasting love; therefore, with loving-kindness hath he drawn me" (Jer. xxxi. 3). There never was a time, in the remotest period of a past eternity, when my Father did not kindly think of me, when he did not love me, and when he was not cherishing purposes of mercy and goodness toward me. My Father's love for me is not new-born, and will not prove short-lived, but is from everlasting to everlasting, and the same yesterday, to-day and forever. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth? Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or persecution, or distress, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be

THE LIBRARY
Union Theological Seminary
RICHMOND, VA.

able to separate us from the love of God which is in Jesus Christ our Lord."

But it is presumed that enough has now been said upon this deep and difficult theme. The author hardly dares to hope that he has cleared up every difficulty. He does, however, persuade himself that every impartial seeker after truth, who will closely follow the chain of reasoning, and the methods of illustration to the end, will find his field of vision widening and brightening more and more, and will issue from the examination with clearer convictions of divine truth, with more just and humbling views of man's sinful and ruined state, and with more exalted conceptions of the divine wisdom, love and power. And if these humble efforts should be thus blessed to the establishing of some storm-tossed souls upon the immovable rock of truth, the author's heart shall greatly rejoice, and to God shall be given all the praise.

# ORIGINAL SIN AND TOTAL DEPRAVITY.

IN the animal and vegetable creation, the universal law prevails. Like produces like. Wheat produces wheat; thistles produce thistles; lions beget lions; man begets man.

By the same universal law, sinful and fallen man begets a fallen and depraved offspring. "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one." (Job xiv. 4.) Adam was created in the moral and spiritual image of his Maker. But when love for his created wife led him astray from God, and caused him to choose the creature rather than the Creator, his heart was perverted, and became corrupt and depraved.

As he thus lost his original righteousness and purity, he, of course, could not impart a righteous and holy nature to his offspring. He could communicate only what he himself had, and not what he had not. Hence we are told (Gen. v. 3) that "Adam lived a hundred and thirty years, and begat a son *in his own likeness.*"

By virtue of the constitution with which his Maker has endowed him, the parent begets not only the body, or physical nature, of the child, but the soul, or immortal nature, as well. Hence children resemble

their parents in their mental and moral characteristics as much as in their physical form and features.

This moral taint, this corruption of nature, derived from Adam, and imparted from sire to son through hundreds of generations, is what is commonly called original sin, or innate depravity. It is the sad birthright of every human being. With David, every man must confess, "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me" (Psa. li. 5); and with Paul (Eph. ii. 3), "Among whom also we all had our conversation [course of life] in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others." The expression, "by nature," in this verse, is emphatic, and evidently is intended to teach us that our depravity is original, and natural to us as fallen and corrupt beings. We are naturally sinful and depraved.

The serpent is a serpent by nature, because it was begotten by a serpent; and the little thing, as soon as it is born, licks out its tiny forked tongue, and manifests all the venom of the serpent nature. It is *by nature* a serpent.

The unfledged vulture is a vulture because it was procreated by its parent vultures, and begins to show its appetite for putrid flesh as soon as it can open its little beak. It is *by nature* a vulture.

The wild turkey and the wild partridge are wild *by nature,* and although they may be hatched out under the brooding of a domestic fowl, they fly away

to the wild woods as soon as they escape from the narrow confinement of their little shells.

The cat, or little kitten, will spring upon a mouse or bird, although she never saw one before. It is *her nature* so to do.

Just so, man is a sinner *by nature*. It is just as natural for him to love and practise sin as it is for the vulture to eat putrid flesh, for the wild turkey to seek the wild woods, for the serpent to bite, or for cats to catch mice.

I know that these are homely illustrations, and I employ them for that very reason, being plain and simple, and capable of being understood by even the little child.

The Pelagian tells us that all men sin because they learn it from the example of others around them; that the little child comes into the world without taint, with an uncorrupted moral nature, and afterwards becomes a sinner from following the example of its parents and others.

Before I can consistently embrace Pelagianism, I must give up the truth that stares me in the face everywhere I look, that like produces like. When I see, with my own eyes, good, ripe figs grown by the wild thorn, or luscious grapes hanging in generous clusters from the parent bramble, or the ravenous lion giving birth to the innocent lamb, then, and not until then, can I embrace the teachings of Pelagianism, and believe that corrupt man generates an incorrupt offspring.

But the Pelagian may reply that the doctrine of

original sin, or innate depravity, impeaches the holiness of the Creator. God is the author of man's being, and if he makes us unholy from the womb, he himself is the author of our sin. There would, I reply, be some semblance of force in this argument, if we taught, as many do, that the divine power created each human soul separately, and implanted the newly created soul in the little child at or before its birth.

If each soul is thus made by a separate act of creative energy, it would follow, either that God made it sinful and depraved in the beginning, or that the child is born without moral taint, as the Pelagian affirms, and learns to sin only through the influence of a bad example, or that the soul created by God and placed in the body in a holy state is immediately corrupted and defiled by its union with the flesh.

But the truth is doubtless this: God endowed man at his creation with the power to generate the souls, as well as the bodies, of their offspring. Our first parents were created holy, with no moral taint in body or soul; but, by voluntary disobedience, they corrupted their whole natures, and by ordinary generation imparted to their offspring a nature depraved throughout, body and soul. "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners," etc. (Rom. v. 19). We shall have occasion to use this verse again when we come to consider the doctrine of imputation. It is sufficient to observe at present that though it has a broader application, it certainly teaches, among other things, that Adam's sin corrupted, not only his

own nature, but, by natural, if not by penal, consequence, corrupted also the nature of "many" others, even all his natural offspring.

Hence we can understand the Psalmist when he says, "The wicked go astray from the womb, speaking lies." Does not the little babe display self-will, bad temper, selfishness, and other evil passions, long before it understands the distinction between right and wrong? As the little serpent thrusts out its tongue and shows a disposition to bite long before its fangs are grown, so also the little child exhibits its inborn tendency to evil, long before it realizes what evil is.[1]

Now the question arises, What part of our nature has been corrupted and depraved by Adam's sin? We answer, *Every part.* The whole mind, or soul; the reason, the judgment, the perception, the memory, the conscience, the affections, and the will; the body, with all its appetites and passions; indeed, the whole man, body and soul, is corrupted, degenerated and depraved.

This is what is called total depravity; total in that it attaches to, and inheres in, every part of the man, body, soul and spirit. No part has escaped

[1] By reference to the next chapter, it will be seen that the author held strongly to the doctrine of imputation, as grounded on federal representation; and, therefore, did not believe, as might be inferred from reading this discussion alone, that the parental relation was the only ground of the transmission of a sinful nature from Adam to his posterity.—EDITORS.

its foul touch, its polluting presence and power. *The man* is depraved.

In Gen. vi. 5 Moses describes the total depravity of the race in these emphatic words, "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." What a gloomy portraiture of fallen humanity! And yet how true!

David draws a similar picture, "The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand and seek God. They are all gone aside; they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." (Psa. xiv. 2, 3.)

Jeremiah adds his testimony in language equally strong and unequivocal, "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?" (Jer. xvii. 9.)

Just here some serious reader may object, "I see many unsanctified, and even unrenewed, sinners exhibiting in their lives much truthfulness, honesty and amiability. Are such as these totally depraved? They are good citizens, and good neighbors, excellent parents, and dutiful children. Surely these must be exceptions to the rule."

To such serious reader let me say: Did you ever see the farmer go out into the woods, and cut down and clear off the trees and bushes from a piece of ground, making a field smooth and clean and beautiful? And have you not seen that farmer in a few months or weeks compelled to go into that same field

with his grubbing-hoe, and cut down the thousands and tens of thousands of young shoots that were springing up from every stump and root in that once smooth and beautiful field?

That field is like the natural heart of man. Those stumps and roots are like original sin, or innate depravity, in the unrenewed heart; and that farmer, with his grubbing-hoe, is like the law of God, the laws of the land, and the restraints of society, operating upon the outside surface of the natural man, reforming and civilizing him, greatly improving him in his outward conduct and appearance, but leaving all the roots and seeds of inborn depravity untouched, hidden away in the man's secret heart and soul. Luther, in his blunt, but emphatic way, says, "Original sin is like the beard, the more it is shaved off, the faster it grows." Divine grace alone can *dig up* those roots of sin, by regenerating and renewing the heart, and moulding and fashioning it in the likeness of Christ.

Kind reader, you have seen mankind only in civilized and Christian lands, where the Bible, the laws of the land, the restraints of public opinion and the rules of polite society have gone very far toward improving man externally, by planting in his breast some seeds of natural good and amiability.

If you would know more fully the heart of the natural man, read the Apostle's description of the heathen world, in the first and second chapters of his Epistle to the Romans; or read the portraitures of heathen conduct and character as drawn by thou-

sands of modern writers; or go and dwell for a time among savage and barbarous nations, and study their character for yourself, and then tell me whether or not, in your estimation, man, in a state of nature, is wholly depraved.

But the Apostle tells us that even the Gentiles, or heathen, who have not the Bible, "show the work of the law written on their hearts, their consciences bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another; and these having not the law, are a law unto themselves" (Rom. ii. 14, 15). Thus we see that even the heathen are under many restraints, and though they are exceedingly wicked, yet they do not act out all the innate depravity of their hearts.

Bear in mind, then, that the expression "total depravity" does not mean that every man is as wicked and corrupt as he can be. No! Few, if any, in this life become as wicked as they are capable of being. What these words do mean is that each and every part of man is depraved; no part of him has escaped moral defilement; the *whole man,* body, mind and soul, is corrupt. He may have some principles, and some traits of character, that are amiable and commendable; but even these are more or less deficient in purity or strength.

But more especially do these words "total depravity" mean that the natural man is wholly destitute of *spiritual good,* and of love for his divine Lord and Master. He may love his fellow-men, but does not love his God. He may trust his friends from among

men, but does not trust him who alone is worthy of unbounded confidence. He may obey the laws of the land, and the rules of good society, but does not lovingly and gratefully observe the laws of a just and holy God. God is not in all his thoughts. Of love for God, of consideration for God's claims, and of gratitude to God for his unnumbered mercies he is wholly destitute.

Let us now draw some conclusions from this most humbling doctrine of the divine Word.

And, first, if the nature of man be so thoroughly and so deeply depraved, it follows necessarily that he must be wholly and radically changed in heart and spirit before he can be admitted into the holy presence and delightful fellowship of the great God. He whose name alone is holy cannot look upon sin. Sin is the one abominable thing that God hates. Hence the Lord himself declares, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John iii. 3.)

Not only so, the same sinful nature and the same sense of guilt that incline sinners in this world to shun God and avoid his holy presence will keep them out of heaven after death. Even if God should bid them enter heaven, their consciousness of guilt, their fear and sense of shame, their love of sinful ways, would keep them back, and make them slink away in the vain hope of finding some dark pit in which to hide their guilty souls and their polluted, loathsome spirits. No! I repeat it, no unregenerate sinner would enter heaven, if he could. Rather, like the dying British nobleman, would he say, "O thou

blasphemed, yet most indulgent Lord God, hell itself would be a heaven, could it but hide me from thy frown!"

In the second place, we may justly infer from this doctrine that no man will ever believe in Christ, repent of sin, and love and serve God until he be regenerated by the Spirit of God. "Ye are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works" (Eph. ii. 10). The good works of faith, repentance, love and holy obedience cannot flow from a heart that is dead in trespasses and sins.

In conclusion, therefore, I would affectionately urge every impenitent reader to fly to the fountain opened in the gospel of Christ for sin and uncleanness. You are totally depraved; you are dead in trespasses and sins; but the blood of Christ can cleanse you from sin. Your heart is cold, and hard, and dead; but a merciful God is able and willing to save you by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. Let not the consciousness of your great guilt, your deep-seated pollution, keep you back. Remember, he came "to seek and to save that which was lost." And as you feel and know that you are lost, you may, therefore, confidently believe that you are the very lost sinner for whom he died.

# IMPUTATION.

"For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."—ROM. v. 19.

THIS is one of those deep places in Paul's epistles, which Peter said were "hard to be understood." Let us, therefore, be careful lest we "wrest it to our own destruction." Perhaps it is impossible to clear up all the mysteries that envelop this subject, but, by the help of God, the writer hopes to throw some ray of light across this dark place.

The first man in the text is Adam; the second is Christ. Adam's disobedience, or sin, makes us sinners; Christ's obedience, or righteousness, makes us righteous. In the one case, we become sinners through the act of another committed thousands of years before we were born; in the other case, we become righteous through the deeds of another, who lived and died more than eighteen hundred years ago. Adam's sin ruined us; Christ's righteousness saves us.

How does Adam's sin make us sinners? Did Adam's sin corrupt his own nature, and then did he beget children just like himself, unholy and unclean? Yes. This is the truth; but not the whole truth.

Would God doom you and me, and all the millions of our race, to come into the world polluted and depraved, if we were not previously judged to be

guilty? Our *birth in sin* is on account of our *condemnation for the sin of Adam imputed to us.* We had our probation in him. As our federal head, or representative, he was on trial for all our race, and when he fell, the whole race fell.

And now, because we fell in Adam, and were condemned in him, the guilt of our head being imputed to all his posterity, God dooms us to come into the world with depraved and sinful hearts, that lead us astray from the day we are born.

How does the obedience of Christ make us righteous? By virtue of the same principle of imputation. Christ stood for us as our federal head, or representative. He obeyed the law in our stead, and his obedience is imputed to us; that is to say, is set down to our credit in God's book of accounts.

Furthermore, Christ's obedience secures for us the gift of the Holy Ghost, by whose power we are regenerated, or born again; and as our first, or natural, birth connected us with Adam, and made us partakers of his sin and condemnation, so in like manner, our second, or spiritual, birth connects us with Christ, and makes us partakers of his righteousness and justification.

When Adam sinned, we all sinned in him; not actually, but representatively. He was our head, our agent, acting for us. What a man does through his agent he does himself. When Christ obeyed, all the redeemed obeyed in him; not actually, but representatively, for he was their head, or agent, acting for them.

When Adam was condemned, all his race were condemned in him. When Christ was justified, all his people were justified in him. Adam's sin was imputed to us, and we are punished for it. Christ's righteousness is imputed to us, and by it we are justified and saved.

This is the Apostle's meaning when he says in the text, "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one many shall be made righteous." Adam is thus a type of Christ, as Paul declares in this same chapter (verse 14). We disobeyed in the one; we obeyed in the other. We were ruined by the one; we are saved by the other; and the underlying principle in both cases is the same, the principle of imputation. The sin of the one is imputed to us, and counted our sin; the righteousness of the other is imputed to us, and counted our righteousness; and this is done because both Adam and Christ acted for us as our federal head and representative.

Having thus ascertained the meaning of the text, let us now look at some of its difficulties.

And first, perhaps some inquiring mind may ask, Did not the omniscient One foresee that Adam would fall, and thus ruin himself and all his race? Why, then, did he create him? Nothing is hidden from God. "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning." Why, then, did the God of love create man, knowing in advance all the disastrous consequences that would follow?

In reply, I would say, first, that God has not seen

fit to tell us the reason why. Doubtless he had a reason, a good and sufficient reason; but he was under no obligation to reveal it to us. Had he done so, perhaps we should not have been able to understand it.

Furthermore, how could God manifest his glory, if there were no creatures to behold that glory? For example, how could God manifest the glory of his mercy, were there no sinners to whom that mercy could be extended? And how could God manifest his glorious justice and abhorrence of sin, were there no sin to be punished?

These inquiries may furnish some hints in regard to the reason why God made man, knowing beforehand that he would sin and fall; but since we know so little, we must be content to believe what God has revealed in his Word, and not be too curious to understand the reason why.

But perhaps another may ask, Why am I punished for the act of another, in which I had no conscious share? I never committed Adam's sin; why is it imputed to me? Where is the justice of making one man suffer for the sin of another?

In seeking to throw some light upon this deep and difficult question, let us note carefully the following facts:

Adam was created holy, in the image of God morally and spiritually, with no native inclination or tendency to evil. He was, therefore, abundantly able to stand, and thus save himself and all his race.

Adam was created a man, not a child; and the

trial came upon him in the full strength of maturity and manhood. Whereas, if each of us had stood for himself alone, the trial would have begun in helpless infancy, unless, indeed, God had adopted a different order of nature, and made us men and women at the start.

Our trial in Adam was suspended upon one simple command, and not upon the whole moral law, as it might have been. How easy to abstain from eating the fruit of a single tree among so many! And what matchless mercy did God show in proposing to justify and save Adam, and all his race, on the ground of obedience to this one easy command, when he might have required obedience to the whole law!

Our probation in Adam was of limited duration; not extended over all time, and eternity, too, as it might have been.

What better chance could we have had? Could we have had even as good a chance upon any other plan? If Adam had stood out his short and easy trial, he would have secured eternal life for himself, and for all his posterity. One trial for all, instead of myriads.

For if Adam had not stood for all, each one must have stood for himself. Standing thus, each one for himself, if we fall, we fall irrecoverably, as the angels did; for if we exclude the principle of representation, and make every one stand for himself, no Redeemer can be allowed, and if we fall, our condition is forever helpless and hopeless.

For if Adam could not justly stand for us, neither can Christ. If we exclude the principle in the one

case, we must exclude it also in the other; for if it be unjust to impute Adam's sin to us, it is also unjust to impute our sins to Christ, and his righteousness to us.

The death of infants proves this doctrine. Why do they die, if not sinners? Their salvation proves it. They never actually and personally obeyed. Why, then, are they saved? The principle of imputation alone solves the difficulty. They died in Adam. They live in Christ.

# REGENERATION.

IN the discussion of this mysterious subject we shall attempt to answer the following questions: What is regeneration? What part of man's nature is regenerated? How are we regenerated? Who is the author of regeneration? How often is one regenerated? Why is regeneration necessary? What are the evidences of regeneration?

WHAT IS REGENERATION? Regeneration is a second begetting, or a begetting again. Generation gives natural life; regeneration, spiritual life. By the one we become the children of men; by the other, the children of God.

In the Scriptures this experience is spoken of as a birth, "Ye must be born again" (John iii. 7). We know what it is to be born, and this helps us to understand what it is to be born again. The first, which is of man, gives natural life and power; the second, being from God, gives spiritual life and power.

This experience is also called a resurrection, "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins" (Eph. ii. 1). Regeneration is the resurrection of the soul.

Furthermore, this experience is declared to be a creation, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature" (or creation) (2 Cor. v. 17). "Ye are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works" (Eph. ii. 10).

From all this, it is clear that regeneration is not reformation. Reformation is superficial; regeneration is radical. The one affects only the exterior; the other changes the heart.

Nor is regeneration mere morality. The Pharisees of our Lord's day were scrupulously moral, and yet he declared they were like "whited sepulchres, beautiful indeed without, but within full of dead men's bones."

Nor is regeneration synonymous with baptism, or joining the church; for Judas Iscariot, though a member of the church, was still "a devil," and Simon Magus, though baptized, was still "in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity."

No, let us never forget, regeneration is none of these, nor all of these combined, but *is that radical change,* wrought in the heart of the sinner, by which his soul, dead in sin, is made alive to holiness and to God, and by which his tastes and dispositions are so revolutionized that he ceases to love sin, and begins to love God. "In Christ Jesus he is a new creature; old things have passed away, behold all things have become new." He now hates what he once loved; he now loves what he once hated.

This is the change of which the prophet speaks, "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put

my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them" (Ezek. xxxvi. 25–27).

Regeneration, like generation, is instantaneous. There may be, and, in fact, often is, much preparatory work. The work of enlightening the mind in the knowledge of the truth, and the work of convincing the soul of its sin and misery may go on for days and months, and even years; but all this is preparatory, and the crowning act of regeneration itself takes place in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye.

Is the soul active or passive in regeneration? This seems to be a fool's question; but some have seriously contended that the soul of the sinner actively coöperates in its own regeneration. They might just as reasonably assert that the natural child coöperates in its own generation, or that a thing can act before it exists. The natural child must be begotten by another before it can coöperate in any act; and in like manner, the spiritual child must be begotten again before it can act spiritually, or coöperate in any good work. Regeneration is a spiritual resurrection, and we might just as reasonably maintain that the dead can actively coöperate in their own resurrection, as that the soul of the sinner can actively coöperate in its own regeneration. In *conversion* the soul, of course, is active; but in regeneration, necessarily passive.

WHAT PART OF MAN'S NATURE IS REGENERATED? We answer, The soul, or spirit, of man. The soul, dead in sin, is quickened into life. The soul, destitute

of love for God and holiness, is warmed and vivified into a holy love for him who made it and redeemed it.

The body is not regenerated. None of its tastes, or lusts, or dispositions are changed. In death and resurrection the body will be regenerated, sanctified, and made a spiritual and holy body, but in this life it remains unchanged, and "the spirit lusteth against the flesh, and the flesh against the spirit, and these are contrary the one to the other" (Gal. v. 17).

Hence the importance of obeying the injunction of the Apostle, "Abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul" (1 Peter ii. 11), and of following the example of Paul, who said, "I keep my body under, and bring it into subjection, lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway" (1 Cor. ix. 27).

This is the explanation of that bitter conflict so vividly described by the Apostle, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do. . . . I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Rom. vii. 18–25.)

How much of the soul is regenerated? All. The

intellect, the affections, and the will. Does regeneration implant any new faculties in the soul? No. The soul needs no new faculties. It already possesses perception, reason, judgment, memory, will, affection and conscience; but the will is enslaved by sin, the affections are corrupted and inclined to evil, and the intellect is blinded and enfeebled, and in spiritual things chooses darkness rather than light.

What man needs is not new faculties, but a rectification of the faculties already in his possession; and when God says, "A new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you," he simply means to tell the sinner that he will enlighten his understanding, and enable him to discern spiritual truth; that he will rectify his will, and enable him to choose the good and refuse the evil, and that he will purify his affections, and enable him to love the right and hate the wrong.

WHO IS THE AUTHOR OF REGENERATION? Baptism? Or "the grace of God inseparably connected with baptism"? Then it follows that Ananias and Sapphira, who were baptized, are in heaven to-day, although they lied unto the Holy Ghost, and were immediately stricken down as a punishment for their crime; and that the penitent thief, who was not baptized, is to-day in hell, in spite of our Lord's assurance, "To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise."

Not only so, if baptism regenerates, or "the grace of God inseparably connected with baptism," then *all* who die without baptism, including myriads of little

children, are lost; and every minister of the gospel should at all times carry a supply of water with him, and never rest until every man, woman and child had received baptism.

Surely a doctrine that involves such consequences as these does not deserve serious consideration; we, therefore, dismiss the doctrine of baptismal regeneration without further notice, and affirm that God the Holy Ghost is the sole author of regeneration. The eternal and almighty Spirit, who made man's soul in the beginning, can re-create and renew that soul, and he alone. The sublimest act of creative energy is the formation of a rational and immortal soul, and no less an act of omnipotent power is the re-creation of a fallen and depraved soul.

This is undoubtedly the teaching of the Word of God: "He saved us by the washing of regeneration and [or, even] the renewing of the Holy Ghost" (Titus iii. 5). "A new heart also will *I* give you, and a new spirit will *I* put within you" (Ezek. xxxvi. 26). "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit" (John iii. 6). "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God" (John i. 13). "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John iii. 5).

In this last text, water is joined with the Spirit, as the shadow is joined with the substance. Water is the sign, or symbol, of the Holy Spirit. Water gives life to the body, the Spirit gives life to the soul.

Water cleanses the body, the Spirit cleanses and purifies the soul. Water refreshes and cheers the body, the Spirit cheers and refreshes the soul. Hence water is an appropriate emblem of the Holy Spirit, and has been appointed by Christ to be used sacramentally in baptism, to represent and symbolize the blessed Spirit, by whom we are regenerated, sanctified and baptized into one body, even Christ.

How is one regenerated? This is confessedly a most mysterious subject. Who can explain how we are generated in the beginning? Who can tell how the seed in the ground is quickened into life, and made to germinate and spring up a living plant? Who can tell how the forests, that were a few weeks ago leafless, and apparently lifeless, are now clothed with the verdure and flowers of spring?

On this very subject, in reply to the question of Nicodemus, "How can these things be?" our Lord said, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth. So is every one that is born of the Spirit" (John iii. 8). The manner of the Spirit's operations upon the heart of man, like the blowing of the wind, is a mystery. We cannot see the wind, nor understand many things connected with its operations; but, both from experience and observation, *we know* there is wind, and that its blowing produces mighty effects.

In like manner, we cannot see the Holy Spirit, nor understand how he operates on the human heart, but from experience and observation, as well as from the

Word of God, *we know* that there is a divine Spirit, and that he works most powerfully upon the hearts of the children of men, turning them from darkness to light, and from the power of sin and Satan unto God.

The material world, no less than the spiritual, is full of mysteries. At one season of the year, the vegetable kingdom, in the icy embraces of winter, seems to be sleeping the sleep of death. A few months afterward, all is life, activity and beauty. What produces such a wonderful change? We are told that the *light* and *heat* of the sun, together with the gentle *breezes* and genial *showers,* are the explanation of this mysterious change from winter to spring.

But who can tell exactly *how* this change is brought about? Here are four agents at work to produce life and growth; namely, light, heat, water and air. Two of them, light and water, are visible, and yet how mysterious their influences upon vegetable life! Shall we deny their beneficent agency in the world about us simply because we cannot fully understand the mode of their operation? Two of these agents, heat and air, are invisible, and yet who does not know that no seed can germinate, and no plant can live without heat and air? What folly, then, it would be to deny the existence of heat and air simply because we cannot see them, or to deny their life-giving agency in the vegetable world simply because we cannot fully understand it!

If, then, we cheerfully grant the existence of mysteries in the material world, shall we stumble and

halt on account of mysteries in the spiritual world? Shall we deny the existence of the Holy Spirit simply because we have never seen him? On the same ground, we could deny the existence of the wind, and the heat of the sun. Shall we deny his blessed agency in the salvation of the sinner simply because we cannot understand the manner or mode of his operation? On the same ground precisely could we deny the agency of light, heat, air and water in the production of life and growth in the material world.

How often can one be regenerated? How often can one be born with a natural birth? When we find a man who has experienced two or more natural births, perhaps we shall find one who has likewise experienced two or more spiritual births, and not before.

The Scriptures declare that we "must be born again," but are absolutely silent in regard to a third birth. They tell us that we are saved "by the washing of regeneration," but say nothing whatever of a re-regeneration. From this alone we might conclude that a third birth is impossible; so that if we should lose the life obtained in our second birth, and become the children of the devil again, we must inevitably remain such forever.

This conclusion becomes irresistible when we add the testimony of our Lord, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my words, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto

life" (John v. 24). When a man can have everlasting life that is not everlasting, and when he can be in a condition from which he shall not come into condemnation, and yet does come into condemnation from that very condition, then may we believe, and not till then, that the life imparted to the soul in regeneration may be lost, and a second regeneration become necessary.

A man may be *converted* many times; but regenerated only once. Conversion is not regeneration, although in popular language the two words are used interchangeably. Conversion means a turning, and a child of God may return, or be converted, to the path of duty just as often as he wanders from that path. Our Saviour said to Peter, after predicting his shameful denial, "When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren" (Luke xxii. 32).

Peter had been regenerated long before, and of this experience there could be no repetition; but when, in the presence of Jewish servants, he cursed and swore, and basely denied himself to be a disciple of the lowly Nazarene, he was far, far away from the path of duty. His Master foresaw his need of conversion to that path, and when, under that look of love and pity, he went out and thought on his sins, and wept bitterly, the wandering disciple was converted.

IS REGENERATION NECESSARY TO SALVATION? There can be but one answer to this question. Our Lord said to Nicodemus, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (John iii. 3); and again, "Except a

man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John iii. 5).

The explanation of this necessity is given in the next verse, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." That is to say, from our natural birth we derive only a human nature. That nature is sinful, and before we can enter heaven, we must possess a spiritual nature, which can be secured only by being born of the Holy Spirit.

By nature, we are all dead in sin. By nature, therefore, are we "the children of wrath" (Eph. ii. 3), for "the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men" (Rom. i. 18). "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God" (Matt. v. 8). "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man can see the Lord" (Heb. xii. 14).

Even if an unregenerate sinner were allowed to enter heaven, it would not be heaven for him. Even here on earth sinners feel ill at ease in the society of the saints; how much more so in heaven, where an infinitely holy God dwells, amid countless hosts of angels that never sinned, and an innumerable company of "the spirits of just men made perfect."

What pleasures could the unregenerate expect in heaven? The vain things they now enjoy on earth shall pass away and perish. Can they enjoy the communion of saints there, who avoid the assemblies of the redeemed here on earth? Can they enjoy the immediate presence of God then, who never on earth

frequent his house, and know naught of communion with him at a throne of grace? Can they take pleasure in singing God's praises then, whose voices now are never heard in the great congregation, and on whose lips God's name is never heard at all, save in blasphemy? Can they, whose hearts are full of enmity and rebellion against God, enjoy an eternal contemplation of his glories, as displayed in creation, providence and redemption? To ask such questions is to answer them. Heaven itself must be essentially changed before it could be heaven to the unregenerate.

But is not reformation sufficient? Why may not the soul be sufficiently prepared for heaven by education, training and culture? Because these are all superficial; they cannot reach the seat of sin, the heart. Reformation makes a man far more respectable in the sight of his fellow-men, but reformation without regeneration is like trying to purify the stream without cleansing the fountain head. *The heart* must be renewed, "for out of it are the issues of life" (Prov. iv. 23). Education and culture can do much for a man, but after all their efforts, the heart is unchanged, the sinful *nature* remains the same.

Cultivate and train the crab-apple tree as much as you please, but it remains a crab-apple still. The quantity of the fruit may be somewhat increased, and the quality slightly improved, but its nature is unchanged.

Take the young lion early enough, and by education and training, you can make him an apparently gentle

and harmless beast; but his nature is unchanged; he is a lion still, and the taste of one drop of blood may arouse all the sleeping instincts of his savage nature.

It was to Nicodemus, "a ruler of the Jews," a high-toned gentleman, that our Lord asserted the necessity of the new birth; and when the apostles of reformation, morality and culture shall stand at the pearly gates, seeking admission, to their eternal confusion shall they hear again the old familiar words, "Except a man be born again, he cannot enter the kingdom of God." On that day, "those who have not been born again, will wish that they had never been born at all."

WHAT ARE THE EVIDENCES OF REGENERATION? How may we know that we have been born again?

Some appeal to experience. They had a conscious experience of the change, and remember the time, the place and all the attendant circumstances. But this experience is not universal, for many of God's dear children do not remember a time when they did not love God, and did not earnestly desire to serve and obey him.

Nor is such an experience necessary. Jeremiah and John the Baptist were subjects of grace from infancy, and could never have had such an experience. The Bible insists upon the necessity of our being born again, but says nothing about the necessity of our knowing when or where.

We have no recollection of our first birth; we are satisfied to know that we *are now alive*. And this is

all that need give us concern respecting our second birth. *Are we now alive unto God?*

Can we know this? We can, and we ought. "These things have I written unto *you that believe* on the name of the Son of God, *that ye may know that ye have eternal life*" (1 John v. 13). Knowledge upon this point is both our privilege and our duty.

How, then, may we know? As regeneration is the work of the Holy Spirit, *the fruits of the Spirit* always appear, more or less manifest, in the heart and life of the regenerate.

What are these? "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance" (Gal. v. 22, 23). These holy exercises and affections appear in the hearts and conduct of all truly regenerated persons, and by these fruits they may know themselves to be the children of God, and heirs of life eternal. "By their fruits ye shall know them" (Matt. vii. 20).

But do not faith and repentance precede regeneration? Some would answer, Yea, but our reply is, Nay. Can a thing act before it exists? Is there action on the part of the child yet unborn? Can the dead man act before his resurrection?

Furthermore, if a sinner can believe and repent before he is regenerated, then there remains to him no need of regeneration. Having believed, he is already justified, and has peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, and, therefore, will go to heaven, whether he is ever born again or not. Our blessed Lord was, therefore, mistaken when he said, "Except

a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God."

Nor is this all. If a sinner can believe and repent before he is regenerated, then he can do his whole duty to God, without regeneration. He that can believe and repent can also love and obey; and, therefore, again, regeneration is not necessary, and our Lord was mistaken when he said, "Ye must be born again." But "let God be true, and every man a liar." Well did he know that a man must live before he can act; that there must be spiritual life before there can be such spiritual exercises as faith and repentance.

Before regeneration, there may be some lively apprehension of divine truth, under the convincing power of the divine Spirit, but not amounting to evangelical or saving faith; and, at the same time, some alarm, some fear of punishment, some apparent sorrow for sin because it exposes one to God's wrath, and some endeavors to turn from sin to God, but not amounting to evangelical repentance. Faith, repentance, love and obedience are good works performed only by those who have been born again. "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works" (Eph. ii. 10). The expression, "created in Christ Jesus unto good works," evidently means that our creation in Christ, that is to say, our regeneration, was for the performance of good works, and not because we had already done such works. Before our new birth, we were neither able nor willing to believe, to repent, to love God, and keep his commandments.

Just at this point, we may pause a moment to take

a comprehensive view of the economy of man's salvation, and ascertain the precise part performed by the several persons in the adorable Trinity.

Before the foundation of the world, God the Father and Law-giver, viewing mankind as lost and sinful, by an act of his divine will, which is law, constituted his Son and all his elect one body corporate in law, Christ the head, his people the members.

In the fulness of time, Christ the Son, by assuming human nature, identified himself with his elect, bearing all their sins, and obeying the law in their stead.

In due time, the Holy Spirit regenerates and quickens all God's chosen ones, and engrafts them into Christ, spiritually uniting their souls to him. "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free" (1 Cor. xii. 13).

Thus every person in the Godhead has his appropriate part in the great scheme. The work of the Son flows from the Father's eternal purpose of grace, and the work of the Holy Spirit, for us and within us, flows from the atoning work of the Lord Jesus Christ. What a comprehensive and glorious plan!

To its divine Author, the Triune God, be dominion and glory forever and ever. Amen.

# SANCTIFICATION.

IN the progress of the soul's salvation, the sinner is first enlightened in the knowledge of Christ, and convicted of his sin and misery. He is thus taught his need of a Saviour, and particularly his need of renewing and justifying grace. Then, in the twinkling of an eye, in answer to prayer, as a rule, he is regenerated by the Spirit of God, and begins to believe, repent, love and obey.

Now the Christian race begins. Now the battle with sin, self, the world and the devil is joined. Now begins the work of the soul's sanctification.

On a certain occasion, a professing Christian, having just united with the church, exclaimed, "Thank God, my work is now done." Foolish man! If he were a Christian at all, his true life work was just begun.

Sanctification means making holy. In the work of sanctification, "we are renewed in the whole man after the image of God, and are enabled more and more to die unto sin, and live unto righteousness." In regeneration the love of God and of holiness, and the principle of spiritual life, are implanted in the soul. But "the Canaanite is still in the land." "Much land yet remains to be possessed." Sanctification is not complete. Many battles are yet to be fought.

If the Lord had so willed, he could have annihilated

every Canaanite in a moment of time, by his own almighty power, thus leaving his people nothing to do but to enter unopposed, and take possession of the promised land. But not so. He leaves them to fight many a battle, to drive out the enemy little by little, and only after years of conflict to take full possession of the goodly land.

And here we have an illustration of the work of grace in the heart. God does not make his children perfectly holy all at once. He gives them new life. He imparts to them both the will and the power to work. He turns their faces toward himself, and toward the land of eternal rest, and then says, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling," while he continues to "work in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Thus does God honor them by making them co-workers with himself in the good work of their own deliverance from sin and ruin.

Sanctification must be clearly distinguished from regeneration. Regeneration is the birth of the Christian; sanctification his development and growth to ultimate perfection. Regeneration is an act, sanctification a work. Regeneration is instantaneous, sanctification progressive and protracted. Regeneration is the act of the Holy Spirit, in which man has no part; in sanctification man is graciously permitted to coöperate. In regeneration the Spirit operates directly and immediately upon the human soul; the work of sanctification is carried on from beginning to end by the use of divinely appointed means.

Let us also distinguish between sanctification and justification. Justification is an act; sanctification a work. Justification is instantaneous; sanctification progressive and gradual. Justification is external; sanctification internal. Justification changes our relation to God's law; sanctification changes our hearts, our nature and our character. Justification delivers from the guilt and penalty of sin; sanctification from the power, the love and the practice of sin. Justification gives a title to heaven; sanctification a fitness for heaven.

But though justification and sanctification are entirely distinct, and should never for a moment be confounded, let us not imagine that in experience they are ever separated and found apart. Like the light and the heat of the sun, they are always found together. God never justifies a sinner, and leaves him unsanctified; nor does he ever sanctify him, and leave him unjustified. "He that hath begun a good work in you will perform it unto the day of the Lord Jesus." The justification of the sinner when he first believe, and his incipient sanctification are pledges and foretokens of his ultimate and everlasting deliverance from sin's pollution and power.

Let us now consider the question of entire sanctification in this life. Can a child of God live without sin? Some professing Christians claim sinless perfection, declaring that they have not committed a sin in months, and even years.

Such a claim is founded upon ignorance; ignorance of their own hearts, ignorance of God's Word,

or ignorance of the real nature of sin and of holiness. When, therefore, you hear a man profess to be absolutely sinless, you may know, unless he is a base and deliberate hypocrite, that he is wofully deceived in regard to his own character and conduct; that he has very low and inadequate conceptions of the spirituality and purity of God's law, and a most superficial knowledge of his own heart.

The claim of sinless perfection is contradicted by universal Christian experience. Abraham, the father of the faithful, and "the friend of God," in an hour of weakness and strong temptation, was guilty of falsehood. So, too, was Isaac, one of the most faultless of men. Moses, a man of overcoming faith, and the meekest of men, in a burst of passion, "spake unadvisedly with his lips," and was not allowed to enter the promised land. David, "the man after God's own heart," was hurried, by overpowering temptation, into the foul crimes of adultery and murder. Peter, the man of rock, denied his Lord with cursing and swearing. Paul, the great Apostle to the Gentiles, declared, "The good that I would, I do not, and the evil that I would not, that I do."

And the experience of these is the experience of all. The Christian who does not sin, in thought, word or deed, is yet to be found; and if those who say they have no sin could see themselves as others see them, they would assuredly discover in their hearts and lives much that is most offensive to a just and holy God.

This claim of entire sanctification is still further contradicted by the express declarations of the Word of God. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (1 John i. 8). "For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not" (Eccl. vii. 20).

On the other hand, it is claimed that the Scriptures just as clearly assert that the Christian may, and does, experience entire sanctification here on earth. "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God" (1 John iii. 9).

How shall we reconcile this apparent contradiction? The only explanation that I have to offer is that the Apostle uses the word "sin" in two senses, a higher and a lower. A sin committed knowingly, wilfully and deliberately, is quite a different thing from the same act committed ignorantly or inadvertently, or committed in an hour of weakness under pressure of overpowering temptation. Human law, as well as divine, draws a wide distinction here, declaring that the guilt of a crime is greatly aggravated when committed deliberately, with malice aforethought.

No true Christian can gain his own deliberate consent to sin against the blessed Saviour, who loved him and died to save him from sin. The man who can deliberately, wilfully and habitually indulge known sin is no Christian at all. It is in this sense that the Apostle uses the word when he says, "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin." But a true Christian may, and all true Christians

do, sin ignorantly and inadvertently, or when suddenly overtaken by strong temptation. And hence the Apostle who said, "For his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God," could also say, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."

As the child of God grows in grace, he also grows in knowledge. Thus day by day he gains clearer views of the holy law of God, and also of the imperfections of his own heart and life; and hence every day has abundant reason for self-abasement and self-abhorrence. In the twilight things are seen dimly and uncertainly, and many things are not seen at all. But in the noonday light of the sun the smallest insect, the flying mote, and even the atom of dust may be clearly perceived.

Thus the young Christian, in the dim twilight of incipient faith and love, and even the older Christian, with but little of the light of the glorious Sun of righteousness, may vainly imagine that they are now perfect, that all sin is forever gone; but as they grow in grace and in knowledge, as the light of the rising Sun shines more and more clearly into their souls, they will doubtless be able to say with Job, when he obtained clearer light, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear; but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore, I abhor myself in dust and ashes."

The oldest, ripest, most spiritually minded Christians are always the humblest and most self-distrusting Christians. Proud, boastful, self-confident Christians are always very little, very weak, very

ignorant, and very imperfect Christians. Hence the degree of one's humility and self-distrust is the best criterion by which to estimate one's growth in grace.

But while we reject the doctrine of sinless perfection as contrary to the Scriptures, and as opposed to Christian experience, let us beware lest we fall into the opposite error. We need have no fear that we shall become too holy, or that the work of sanctification will go on too rapidly. The standard of piety prevailing in the church of to-day is far too low. We are too easily satisfied. Oh! that we could see universal hungering and thirsting after higher and holier things.

Why should we strive after a higher degree of holiness?

1. For the glory of God. "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit" (John xv. 8). The work of creation manifests God's glory; for "the heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork." But the work of redemption is far more glorious still; and when the rich, ripe fruits of holiness are seen in the lives of the saints, God's wisdom, grace, love and power are all most clearly seen in the adaptation of the plan of salvation to the needs of a lost world, and in the application of that plan to the individual heart and life.

What brings honor and glory to the architect? Not the log cabin, but the stately mansion. Would you live for the honor and glory of God? Be a

temple, stately and beautiful, and let the Holy Ghost dwell in you richly by faith.

The husbandman is glorified, not by these dwarfed, misshapen, barren trees of his orchard, but by those goodly trees, strong, stately and symmetrical, and laden with luscious fruit. Go thou, and give glory to the divine Husbandman, by bringing forth abundantly the fruits of holiness.

2. Because in this way alone can we fulfil the purpose of our Saviour in dying for us. The Apostle declares (Titus ii. 12–14) that he "gave himself for us that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works." It is, therefore, our solemn duty "to deny ourselves ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live righteously, soberly and godly in this present world." Christ himself declares (John x. 10), "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly."

He is not satisfied that we barely live. The lifelong invalid lives; but oh! how feeble, how weak, how helpless! He wants us to live abundantly, like the healthly man, vigorous and strong, with rich, red blood bounding through every vein. He has made abundant provision for this, and will not be satisfied until he sees in his people "the travail of his soul" bearing the fruit of abundant holiness, abundant faith, abundant strength, abundant peace and joy.

3. Because only in this way can we discharge our mission to the world around us. Our Saviour prays, "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy word is truth.

As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world" (John xvii. 17, 18). Christ's people are saved, and then sent out into the world, even as the Master himself was, to bless and save the world; and before sending them out, he prays the Father that they may be sanctified; for how else can they fulfil their mission of blessing and salvation to a lost world? For the world will be saved, if saved at all, not by those who are conformed to the world, but by the faithful few who have been by grace transformed into the image of Christ.

"Ye are the light of the world. A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid. Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." "Ye are the salt of the earth. But if the salt have lost his savor, wherewith shall it be salted? It is thenceforth good for nothing but to be cast out and trodden under foot of men."

Oh! what a meager blessing to the world around is the life of many a professing child of God! And what doubtful blessings the lives of many more! So little light! Such small supplies of the salt of divine grace! Such poor, lean spirits! Such diminutive and dwarfed specimens of Christian manhood and womanhood! Still babes in Christ! Forty, or fifty, or sixty years old, but babies still!

How can they bring life and salvation to a lost world, when barely alive themselves? How can they lead sinners to "the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world," while doubting their own par-

don and acceptance with God? How can they impart to their fellow-Christians the strength and vigor of Christian character, when the life blood of Christianity beats so feebly in their own hearts?

Oh! how far below the divine ideal! The Master said, "He that believeth on me, out of him shall flow rivers of living water" (John vii. 38). Oh! shame, that we should be satisfied to be a tiny rill, or, worse than that, a wet-weather spring, when the waters of grace and salvation are so abundant that we may be mighty perennial rivers, flowing fresh and free, imparting to all the country round life, fertility, beauty and abundance.

4. For the sake of our own happiness and peace. The child of God ought to be happy. God is his Father. Jesus is his Saviour. The Holy Spirit is his Comforter. Heaven is his home. All things work together for his good. He has a right to be happy. Peace and joy are his birthright. God bids us be happy. "Rejoice evermore; and again I say, rejoice." "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give unto you."

But oh! how often we allow sin to separate between us and our Father, and rob us of our birthright of peace and joy. Because we are so imperfectly sanctified, because we so often do the things we ought not to do, and leave undone the things we ought to do, many of us are in spiritual darkness, doubt and gloom, groping our way mournfully through this vale of tears, without the light of our Father's face, and without the assurance of our acceptance in the Beloved.

Oh! let us strive earnestly for higher degrees of holiness. Let us, by God's grace, rise to a higher plane of Christian experience. So shall we emerge from these low grounds of sin, doubt and gloom, and pitch our tents on the mountain-top, with the cloud and the storm far below, and just above us, and all around us, the clear shining of the glorious Sun of righteousness.

It is thus seen that there are many most weighty reasons for striving after a higher degree of holiness. It has already been stated that the process of sanctification is carried on, from beginning to end, by the use of divinely appointed means. It has also been stated that the child of God is required, and graciously permitted, to coöperate with divine grace in the glorious work of his own sanctification. In view of these facts, the question arises, What is our duty in the matter? What can we do to further this work of grace in our own hearts?

1. Realizing our constant need of divine grace, and realizing further that the Spirit of God is the great agent of purification, we should pray earnestly for the presence and power of the Holy Spirit in our hearts.

2. We should diligently and prayerfully read, believe and obey the Word of God, because the Bible is one of the chief agencies employed by the Holy Spirit in the process of sanctification. Our Saviour realized the importance of this truth, for he prayed to the Father in behalf of his disciples, "Sanctify them through thy truth; thy Word is truth" (John

xvii. 17). The work of grace goes on slowly and uncertainly in many of our hearts, because we do not daily read and study and strive to obey God's holy Word.

3. We should wait upon the Lord regularly, gratefully and unweariedly, by attendance upon all the ordinances and services of the sanctuary. Here God meets with his people in a peculiar sense, lifting upon them the light of his countenance, sending them "help from the sanctuary," and "strengthening them out of Zion," enlarging their knowledge of divine things, strengthening their faith, brightening their hopes, inflaming their love and their zeal, and giving them richer and sweeter experiences of his love, his grace and his power.

4. We should frequently engage in self-examination, private meditation and secret prayer. We should watch, too, as well as pray; constantly on our guard against the entrance of vain thoughts and imaginations into our minds, and against the lodgment of sinful desires and passions in our hearts; for these things "grieve" and "quench" the Holy Spirit, and cannot fail to interrupt and hinder his gracious work.

5. We should practise self-denial, and, as we have opportunity, labor for the glory of God, and for the good of our fellow-men. Our Saviour bore his cross, and counted it meat and drink to do the will of his Father and finish his work; and the same mind that characterized the Master should animate and control the disciple.

6. We should guard against self-satisfaction. No matter how much of divine grace we have experienced in the past, there are in store for us experiences richer and sweeter, experiences deeper and higher and broader. Therefore, "forgetting those things that are behind, and reaching forward to those things that are before," let us press on to higher heights and deeper depths of Christian experience. Let us "add to our faith virtue, and to virtue knowledge, and to knowledge temperance, and to temperance patience, and to patience godliness, and to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness charity; for so an entrance shall be ministered unto us abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

# THE FINAL PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS.

CALVINISTS believe that all truly regenerated persons will persevere in faith and good works to the end of life, and be finally and eternally saved. They believe that the spiritual life imparted to the soul in regeneration is strictly and emphatically eternal life, and that by the help of divine grace that new life will work and fight, will struggle and strive against the world, the flesh and the devil, and ultimately achieve a glorious triumph.

They do not, however, believe the absurdity, which has often been imputed to them by their opponents, that all God's people will eventually go to heaven, no matter how they live. No, we believe in *perseverance*. We believe that every true Christian desires to persevere in faith and holiness to the end of life, and that the Lord will surely give to all his people all the grace they need to render them both willing and able to be faithful unto death, that they may obtain the crown of life.

Let us examine some of the Scriptures that prove this doctrine.

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my words, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life" (John v. 24).

The expression, "hath everlasting life," is in the present tense, and indicates a present possession; therefore, in this world, and in this present time, the believer has everlasting life. The words, "is passed from death unto life," declare that the glorious change has already taken place, by which a child of the devil becomes a child of God; and the expression, "shall not come into condemnation," covers the entire future, and excludes forever the possibility of condemnation for any true believer.

"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand" (John x. 27–29). Our Lord here declares that his sheep, that is to say, his people, hear his voice and follow him; not that they *ought,* but that they *do.* It is a fixed and certain truth that the Lord's sheep do hear his voice and follow him in their general course of life. As another has said: "Christ's sheep have two marks, one in the ear, the other in the foot. 'My sheep hear my voice'; here is the mark in the ear. 'They follow me'; here is the mark in the foot; and these two marks are invariably seen in the sheep of the Lord." This is the doctrine of perseverance.

Furthermore, in this text our Lord says, "I give unto them eternal life"; not I *will,* but I *do.* The life of God in the soul of the believer is from the first truly and emphatically eternal life. When the eternal

Spirit of God quickens a dead soul into life, he implants in that soul a principle of life as indestructible and imperishable as the eternal years of God. That man must entertain a low and grovelling conception of "pure and undefiled religion,' who thinks that, like a fitful meteor, it can flash and flame for a moment, and then expire in perpetual darkness. True piety is the everlasting life of God in the soul of man. From heaven it comes; to heaven it returns. It may be a feeble life at first, but he who gave it will nourish, strengthen and preserve it; for in this same text he declares, "And they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand." Not, any *man,* as in the Authorized Version, but *any*; man, angel, or devil. And, if this were not enough, to make assurance doubly sure, he adds, "My Father, who gave them me, is greater than all, and none shall pluck them out of my Father's hand." "Shall never perish" is coextensive with all the ages to come, both in this world and in the next; and, therefore, the people of God will not, and cannot, perish in time or in eternity. If there be a period not covered by "never," a duration extending beyond eternity, it may come to pass that God's people may perish then; but while time shall endure, and as long as the eternal years of God shall last, the life of love and bliss in the soul of the believer shall not perish.

"Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified" (Rom. viii. 30). In the preceding verse, the Apostle tells us

that there are some whom God "did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." To predestinate is to fix the destiny beforehand; and the glorious destiny to which, and for which, God has predestinated his people is "to be conformed to the image of his Son." Can God's predestinations be defeated? Can any one whom he predestinates to be conformed to the image of Christ, fall short of that glorious destiny? Nay, verily! For "whom he did predestinate, *them* he also called; and whom he called, *them* he also justified; and whom he justified, *them* he also glorified."

This passage clearly teaches that those whom God predestinates are the very ones who are called; that those who are called are the very ones who are justified, and that those who are justified are the very ones who are glorified. God's grace takes four steps in the work of man's salvation—predestination, calling, justification, glorification; and when one of these steps has been taken, all the others will most surely follow. Not one of those who were predestinated shall ever fail to receive the Holy Spirit's effectual call; not one of those thus called shall ever fail to be justified, and not one of the justified shall ever fail to be glorified.

"For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. viii. 38, 39). "The love of God" in

this passage is mutual love; the love of God the Father for his children, and the love of those children for their Father. This mutual love is the bond that binds Father and children together in one great family, and the Apostle declares that no creature shall ever be able to break this bond, and separate those who are thus joined together.

The Arminian may reply that while no creature may be able to break this bond, *sin* may. But let us see. "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God" (1 John iii. 9). The child of God may sin through ignorance, or inadvertence, or may be surprised and hurried into sin by strong provocation, or overpowering temptation; but he cannot commit known, deliberate and wilful sin, cannot consent to it; and when overtaken by it, cannot persist or continue in it.

Shall sin thus committed separate us from him who loved us and gave himself for us, when we were dead in trespasses and sins? Let the inspired Apostle answer, "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life" (Rom. v. 10). God loved us and saved us when we were enemies, perverse and obstinate rebels against his rightful authority. Now that we are children, shall we be disowned and disinherited because of sins of weakness and infirmity, sins of ignorance or inadvertence, sins committed against our settled purpose? Nay, nay. Sin was not in the way then; shall it be

in the way now? In spite of all our enmity, God loved us then, and reconciled us to himself by the death of his Son; *much more* shall he love us now, and continue to save us through all eternity.

These are some of the many passages that might be adduced to prove the doctrine of final perseverance. If these do not prove it conclusively, it would be useless to cite others. These are our warrant for believing that no child of God is ever lost; that every true Christian will most surely persevere in faith and good works to the end of life, and then enter upon the enjoyment of that rest that remaineth to the people of God.

But the Arminian contends that other passages of Scripture just as clearly indicate that the Christian *may* fall away, and be forever lost. Let us, then, examine these passages, and see:

"For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good Word of God, and the powers of the world to come, if they shall fall away, to renew them again to repentance" (Heb. vi. 4–6).

"For if we sin wilfully, after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries" (Heb. x. 26, 27).

"For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and over-

come, the latter end with them is worse than the beginning" (2 Peter ii. 20).

In regard to all these passages, two remarks will suffice:

First. It is by no means clear that the persons here spoken of are true Christians. All that is said of them may, with perfect propriety, be affirmed of those who are fully enlightened and convicted, and have stopped short of regeneration.

Thousands experience "the common operations of the Holy Ghost," as they are called. Under the faithful preaching of the gospel, their minds are enlightened in the knowledge of the truth; they are powerfully convicted of their sin and misery; like Herod, they hear God's servant gladly, and "do many things" that they are bidden to do (Mark vi. 20), and like Felix, they tremble, as some apostle of the truth reasons of "righteousness, temperance and judgment to come" (Acts xxiv. 25), but here the work of grace stops. They wilfully and deliberately reject the truth, harden their hearts, and become more careless and hardened in sin than before.

And when this falling away takes place after *full* enlightenment and conviction, "it is impossible to renew them again to repentance"; they have committed "the unpardonable sin," they have driven away God's Spirit, the only author of regeneration, and their awful destiny is forever sealed. Oh! beware, my impenitent friends, how you trifle with the truth.

Second. But admitting, for the sake of argument, that the persons here spoken of are true Christians,

the passages still fail to prove that the children of God may fall away and perish; for the cases are purely *hypothetical.* "*If* they shall fall away," "*if* we sin wilfully," "*if* they are again entangled, and overcome." The purpose of all the passages is, not to affirm that God's children may and do fall away, but *to prevent their falling away,* by pointing out the awful consequences of forsaking the living God.

Christ is the only possible Saviour, and *if* the child of God turns away from him, he must perish. "Without holiness no man shall see the Lord"; and *if* the true Christian falls away from God, and goes back to a life of sin, he can never enter heaven. Christ is the only source of life; and *if* the believer abide not in him, he is cast forth, as a dead branch, and destroyed.

Therefore, child of God, cherish the new life that is in you, as the gift of God, through the Lord Jesus Christ; abide in Christ, and let his words abide in you; fight the good fight of faith; run with patience the race that is set before you; for *if* you forsake the living God, and become again the slave of sin and Satan, you must forever die.

Thus we believe, and thus we preach. Thus the inspired apostles taught, and their faithful admonitions, though misunderstood by many, were one of the means employed of God to prevent his children from falling away.

Let us now consider some of the objections urged against this truth.

It has often been urged that this doctrine encourages licentiousness; that it is a dangerous doctrine; that if we assure the children of God that they can never perish, they will take advantage of this assurance to continue in sin.

Some twenty-five years ago, two ministers of the gospel were discussing this doctrine, one a Calvinist, the other an Arminian. When the latter's arguments failed, he remarked: "Well, Brother G———, if I believed your doctrine, I would first make sure that I was a Christian, and then I would go and take my fill of sin." Quick as thought the reply came: "Can you tell me, my friend, how much sin it would take to fill a true Christian to his heart's content? Your remark proves that you are no Christian at all. The true child of God hates sin, and the less of it he commits, the better he is satisfied. I advise you to repent; to seek from God a new heart, for if you die with a heart that wishes to take its fill of sin, you must miserably perish." And so it came to pass. Subsequent facts proved that Brother G——— had put a true estimate upon the character of his friend.

In this incident we have, in an object lesson, the objection, and the all-sufficient answer. Our doctrine does not say, If you are a child of God, you can never perish, no matter how you live. On the contrary, it says, If you love the Lord, you will keep his commandments; if you are one of the Lord's sheep, you will hear his voice and follow him; and if you hear not his voice, and keep not his commandments, you are none of his.

Here is no room for licentiousness. The false professor may pervert this doctrine to his own destruction, but this is no reason for rejecting it; for if we must reject every truth that the ungodly and the hypocrite may wrest and pervert to their own ruin, then we shall have no gospel left.

Again, it has been objected that this doctrine cuts the energies of the Christian, and makes him remiss in his efforts to serve God, and to grow in grace; for if he be confident that he cannot be lost, he will not strive with all his heart to fight the good fight of faith and lay hold on eternal life.

They who urge this objection betray their ignorance of the nature of true piety, and, at the same time, their ignorance of the philosophy of the human mind. The more fully a Christian is assured that the Lord has rendered his salvation certain beyond a peradventure, the more love and gratitude will he cherish toward his Saviour, and the more zealously and cheerfully will he serve and obey him.

But this is not all. Man is so constituted that the more fully he is assured that he will win the prize, the more eagerly and persistently will he strive for it; the more confident he is of victory, the more valiantly will he fight for it.

So it is with the soldier of the cross; let him believe that victory is doubtful, and if he fight at all, it will be with only half a heart; but convince him that victory is sure, that defeat is out of the question, and all the hosts of hell cannot make him quail and throw down his arms.

Instead, therefore, of encouraging slothfulness on the part of the Christian, this doctrine has precisely the opposite effect; and it is a fact of history, noted both by Bancroft and Macaulay, that Calvinists have always been distinguished for their energy and uprightness.

The explanation is not difficult. They believe that "by grace are ye saved, through faith"; that "ye are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus *unto good works,* which God hath before ordained that ye should walk in them." *By grace, through faith, unto good works.* They seek grace first. They know that they must have spiritual life before they can perform spiritual acts, and they know that they must be born again before they can have spiritual life. They also know that God's grace alone can change the heart, and renew the soul, and endow it with spiritual life, and render it able and willing to put forth the spiritual acts of faith, repentance, love and holy obedience. Therefore, before they attempt to perform any good works at all, they take their guilty, polluted and lost souls, and lay them down before a gracious Saviour, crying, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Here they continue to lie at the foot of the cross, praying, beseeching and crying for mercy, until pardoning and saving grace is bestowed by him whose very heart is love.

Thus are they saved, not by works of righteousness which they have done, but by grace, through faith in Jesus Christ the Lord. Now, I ask, can any one thus saved fail to love, trust, adore and serve that

gracious Redeemer, who saved him from sin and death and hell? This is why Calvinists are noted for their good works; not in order to be saved, but because they are saved already.

Again, it is objected that this doctrine is contradicted by experience; that, as a matter of fact, Christians do sometimes backslide, become remiss in duty, and allow the sacred fires of love to grow cold on the altar of their hearts.

Alas! for the weakness of partially sanctified human nature, this allegation is unhappily true! But what then? Shall their Heavenly Father cast them off, disown them, and leave them to perish? Does the earthly father cast off his son every time that son becomes remiss in duty? And "whom the Lord loveth, he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth" (Heb. xii. 6).

The resources of the eternal God and Father are inexhaustible, and he has a thousand expedients at his command for the correction and reclamation of his wayward sons and daughters. He can blow upon their wealth, and it will vanish and disappear. He can embitter their pleasures, and they will become unsatisfying and loathsome. He can snatch away their dearest earthly friends, and leave their desolated homes in darkness. He can lay his hand upon them, and their bodies become scorched with fevers and tortured with pain.

By some such affliction, sanctified by his grace, he doth correct and reclaim the wandering child, and the promise is verified, "For our light affliction, which is

but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" (2 Cor. iv. 17).

The Lord does not abandon his people because they may have fallen into sin, for he himself says, "If they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments, then will I visit their transgressions with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless, my loving-kindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail" (Psa. lxxxix. 31–33). Here, in a nutshell, is the history of God's dealings with the backslider.

The sheep may wander away from the flock and the fold; but the good Shepherd goes out into the desert and finds him, and humbling him with the crook of correction, or with the dogs of discipline and sorrow, he takes him in his arms, and bears him on his bosom, penitent, yet rejoicing, back to the fold.

The child dissatisfied may wander away from the Father's house, and take up his residence in a far country; but the infinite Father follows him with love and discipline, the far country fails to satisfy the longings of the soul, the prodigal comes to himself, and in quick succession follows the resolve, "I will arise," the confession, "I have sinned," and the welcome home, the Father's kiss, the ring, the robe, the fatted calf.

If the true Christian wander, as Peter did, like Peter he will return. If one who once professed to be a child of God die in impenitence and unbelief, as Simon Magus did, it is because, like Simon Magus, his faith and penitence were spurious. Of such as he

the Apostle says, "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us" (1 John ii. 19).

Let us rejoice, fellow-Christians, in this soul-cheering truth. "If God be for us, who can be against us? . . . Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth?"

This sinful world is no friend to grace, and while here in the flesh we may expect tribulation and sorrow, but "be of good cheer," saith our Saviour and King, "I have overcome the world."

We wrestle not only against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, Satan and all his hellish crew, walking up and down the world, like ten thousand roaring lions, seeking to destroy; but "they that be with us are more than they that be with them," for "he shall give his angels charge concerning thee," and God himself, at the head of this host of ministering spirits, declares, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for us, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation."

Having this hope to cheer and sustain us, no matter what struggles, temptations and sorrows may come, we can ever sing—

"How firm a foundation, ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in his excellent Word!
What more can he say than to you he hath said,
You who unto Jesus for refuge have fled?

"In every condition, in sickness, in health,
In poverty's vale, or abounding in wealth,
At home and abroad, on the land, on the sea,
As thy days may demand shall thy strength ever be.

"Fear not, I am with thee, oh! be not dismayed,
I—I am thy God, and will still give thee aid;
I'll strengthen thee, help thee, and cause thee to stand,
Upheld by my righteous, omnipotent hand.

"When through the deep waters I call thee to go,
The rivers of woe shall not thee overflow;
For I will be with thee, thy troubles to bless,
And sanctify to thee thy deepest distress.

"When through fiery trials thy pathway shall lie,
My grace all-sufficient shall be thy supply;
The flames shall not hurt thee, I only design
Thy dross to consume, and thy gold to refine.

"E'en down to old age, all my people shall prove
My sovereign, eternal, unchangeable love;
And when hoary hairs shall their temples adorn,
Like lambs they shall still in my bosom be borne.

"The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose,
I will not, I will not, desert to his foes;
That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,
I'll never, no never, no never forsake."

# THE PERPETUITY OF THE ABRAHAMIC COVENANT,

## And the Identity of the Jewish and Christian Churches.

"And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me, that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."—Luke xxii. 29–30.

"And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel."—Matthew xix. 28.

"James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting."—James i. 1.

IT is highly probable that the final battle between truth and error, between Christ and Anti-Christ, will be fought upon the battle-field of ecclesiology; that is to say, upon the doctrine of the church, her constitution, her form of government, her nature and extent.

How old is the church? When was it organized? What form of government was given it? Who were constituted its corporate members? Who was its head? Who were appointed to be its subordinate officers and rulers? What is its creed; and code of

laws? These are a few of the fundamental questions that confront us on the field of ecclesiology. Some of these I shall attempt to answer, and I earnestly bespeak in advance your earnest, prayerful and undivided attention.

How old is the church of Christ? When was it founded? Some answer this question by saying that John the Baptist, or Baptizer, organized the Christian church. But where is the proof? Where is the record of the organization? When and where did John receive a commission from God to organize a church? Will any one be kind enough to show me a single verse even intimating that John organized those whom he baptized into a church? The Holy Scriptures are profoundly silent upon the subject of a church founded by John the Baptizer.

As the forerunner of the Messiah, John was sent to a very old and backslidden church, the Jewish church, to call them to repentance; and upon profession of their repentance, to cleanse and purify them ceremonially, by sprinkling upon them either water and blood, or water and the ashes of a heifer, or simply living, or running, water, according to the positive requirements of the law of Moses. (See Lev. xiv. 7; Num. viii. 6, 7; Num. xix. 17–19.) Accordingly, as John was fulfilling his faithful ministry by preaching in the wilderness of Judea, when he became satisfied that many of the members of this old backslidden church had repented of their sins, and were willing to bring forth fruits worthy of repentance, as a good servant of God and a law-abiding member of the

church, he gathered the multitudes first at the Jordan, and afterwards at Enon, or the springs, as the word "Enon" signifies, and there baptized them; that is to say, cleansed them ceremonially, according to the law of sprinkling given by Moses.

They who claim that John the Baptizer organized the Christian church, and that they themselves are now in the church that John founded, are bound to show John's commission to organize a church, and that he did actually execute that commission. Otherwise they must admit that they belong to a church that has no divine charter, no divine warrant, and no divine constitution; and they who deny that John baptized the people by sprinkling running water upon them, as the law required, must show what authority he had for baptizing in any other way, or must admit that he was a wicked and lawless man, who set aside the law of God, and introduced a new and uncommanded mode.

Others, seeing that there is absolutely no proof that John the Baptizer organized the church, claim that the church was founded by Christ himself during his ministry here on earth. But again, I ask, where is the proof? When and where did the organization take place? Was it before or after his resurrection? was it at Jerusalem, or Bethlehem, or Nazareth? Where is the record? Those who say that Christ organized the church while here on earth ought to be able to point to the time and place. Surely it is of sufficient importance to be on record. In my text the Lord speaks of his kingdom, or church, but says not

a word concerning its organization, but merely commits it, as an organized church already, to the twelve apostles, whom he had previously chosen and ordained to be special rulers in that kingdom.

Others still assert that the church was organized by the apostles, on the day of Pentecost or afterward. But where is the proof? Show us the record. If the Acts of the Apostles contains a record of the organization of a church in Jerusalem, or anywhere else in Judea, I will thank the man who will show me the chapter and verse. Of course, the apostles, when preaching to the Gentiles, organized individual or local churches, after the model of the local churches or synagogues of the Jews; for we read that they ordained them elders in every city where there were believing Gentiles. (Acts xiv. 23; Titus i. 5.) But there is absolutely no evidence that the apostles, on the day of Pentecost or afterwards, founded the church of Christ, as an institution hitherto unknown. Neither is there any intimation of the organization of a particular church among the thousands of believing Jews, in Jerusalem or elsewhere; for these were already in the one true church of God, the Abrahamic church, and needed not to enter another.

But while there is no record of a church founded by John the Baptizer, by Christ himself, or by the twelve apostles, I can refer to the book, chapter and verses, which give the record of the constitution and organization of the church of God to which I claim to belong. I can show the charter of my church's existence, and the divine warrant for its being. I can

show a "thus saith the Lord" for its creed, its sacraments, and its code of laws.

The seventeenth chapter of Genesis is a full and complete history of the constitution of the church of God, as a people or society, separated from the world. In that chapter we are expressly informed that Abraham and his household, which probably consisted of more than a thousand souls, were separated from the world, and were taken into covenant with God, and received from God the sacrament of circumcision, which was "a seal of the righteousness of the faith" (Rom. iv. 11). We are also expressly told that this sacrament of circumcision was a token of the covenant that God then made with Abraham and his family, which covenant is declared to be an *everlasting* covenant.

This covenant the Apostle Paul declared to be still in force, for he says: "And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed; so then they which be of faith [although they be of Gentile blood] are blessed with faithful Abraham." "That the blessing of Abraham might come on the *Gentiles* through Jesus Christ, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made." "And this I say, that the covenant that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, *cannot disannul,* that it should make the promise of none effect." The conclusion, then, is,

"If ye be Christ's [whether Jews or Gentiles] then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise." (Gal. iii.)

All these words were written by Paul to the churches of Galatia, composed mainly of believing Gentiles, and what the Apostle means is this: Although you are by birth and blood Gentiles, yet when you believed in Christ, you became members of the family of Abraham, the father of all that believe; not only children of Abraham, but heirs, and as heirs of Abraham, you inherit the covenant, and the promises of the covenant, which God made with Abraham and his seed; and you have as many rights in and under that covenant as Abraham ever had, and, therefore, as good a right as he to believe that God has graciously bound himself by covenant promises to be "a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee."

This covenant with Abraham, organizing him and his household into the church of God, was renewed at Mt. Sinai, under the ministry of Moses; for in Heb. ix. 19, 20, we read, "When Moses had spoken every precept to all the people, according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book and all the people [even the babes], saying, This is the blood of the testament [or covenant] which God hath enjoined unto you." (See also Ex. xxiv. 7, 8.)

Forty years after they left Mt. Sinai this covenant was again renewed, when Moses, by the command of God, said to the people, "Ye stand this day all of

you before the Lord your God; the captains of your tribes, your elders and your officers, with all the men of Israel, your little ones [thanks be to God for that clause], your wives, and thy stranger that is in thy camp, from the hewer of thy wood unto the drawer of thy water, that thou shouldest enter into covenant with the Lord thy God, and into his oath, which the Lord thy God maketh with thee this day, that he may establish thee to-day for a people unto himself, and that he may be unto thee a God, as he hath said unto thee, and as he hath sworn unto thy fathers, to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob." (Deut. xxix. 10–13.)

This text is very full and explicit, and teaches unmistakably the following truths:

1. This covenant with Moses is but a renewal of the old covenant made with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

2. In this covenant Jehovah engages to be the God of Israel, and takes them to be his peculiar people, a society separate and distinct from the world.

3. In this church "the stranger" should have a place; an intimation of God's purpose to plant his church in every land and clime, in fulfillment of his promise to Abraham, "In thee shall all nations of the earth be blessed."

4. From this text, and many others, we learn, too, that God took the infant offspring of his people into his church, and into the pale of his covenant. And when, I ask, did he cast out of his church the babes of his people? A law once enacted is a law forever,

unless repealed. When did the Lord repeal the law of infant membership in his church? Never.

5. This church, moreover, was a Presbyterian church, ruled by presbyters, or "elders." Many other passages might be cited to prove this. The Presbyterian church of to-day, in which the ruling power is lodged in the hands of elders, is, therefore, the legitimate successor of the old Abrahamic church.

Thus, we learn from the Scriptures of both the Old and New Testaments that the Abrahamic or Jewish church, which was Presbyterian in form, has a divine charter, a divine warrant for its existence, a divine constitution, a divine creed and code of laws, a divine Head, King and Law-giver; and they who claim that God has any church besides the Abrahamic must show us a divine warrant for its existence, and must tell us when, where and by whom it was constituted. Otherwise, they must not be surprised if we regard their claims as unscriptural.

Let us now come to a closer consideration of the text. The night before his death, while seated at the supper table, our blessed Lord said to his apostles, "I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me, that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." From this text we learn that our Lord, so far from organizing a new church, or authorizing his apostles to organize a new church, did simply and only appoint his apostles to be rulers in the old Abrahamic church, the church of "the twelve tribes of Israel." In this old church he places

the apostles on thrones, that is to say, in positions of authority and power, and there they sit to-day by divine appointment, and by their testimony, their example, and their inspired writings, to "judge," or rule, the church of the twelve tribes, the only church of the living God. In this old church the Lord sets his table; and there, and there alone, it remains to this day, for he who placed it there has never removed it. If we are not in this church, we are not in the church of God, but are, as Paul affirms, "Aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise" (Eph. ii. 12).

My second text has precisely the same meaning. Speaking to the twelve apostles, Jesus said, "Verily I say unto you, that ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory [his glorious mediatorial throne, where he now sits], ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel." Our Lord knew no other kingdom or church than the church or kingdom of the twelve tribes of Israel; and here in this old church, and not in a new church, he commissions his apostles to rule.

Now look at my third text. The Apostle James wrote his short but precious epistle nearly thirty years after Pentecost. His opening words are these: "James, a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ, to the twelve tribes which are scattered abroad, greeting." Thirty years after Pentecost, thirty years after Christ ascended to heaven and sat

down upon his glorious mediatorial throne, the inspired and divinely commissioned apostle knew no church of Christ except the church of the twelve tribes. Not to a new church, but to the old Abrahamic church, composed now of believing Jews and Gentiles "scattered abroad," he writes this epistle.

With this agrees the language of Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles. In his noble defence before Festus and King Agrippa, among other things he said: "I stand and am judged for the hope of the promise made of God unto our fathers [Abraham, Isaac and Jacob]; unto which promise our twelve tribes, instantly serving God day and night, hope to come. For which hope's sake, King Agrippa, I am accused of the Jews" (Acts xxvi. 6–7). Even Paul, the apostle of the Gentiles, knew no church but the church of the twelve tribes; no hope but that which was based upon the promise of God to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and no covenant of promise but that everlasting covenant which God made with Abraham when he said, "I will be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee."

In fact, all the apostles, and our Lord himself, were born in the church of the twelve tribes, and never entered any other. The three thousand baptized on the day of Pentecost were all born in the church of the twelve tribes, and never disowned it by joining another. The five thousand believers, mentioned a few days after Pentecost, were all Jews, and were, therefore, born in the church of the twelve tribes; and the Scriptures say not one word of their leaving

that old church and joining a new one. The multitudes of men and women who are said to have believed a little later were all Jews, and as such were born members of the church of the twelve tribes, and no intimation is given of their having renounced the Abrahamic church in order to enter a new one.

This is a most significant fact, and particularly so when considered in connection with this further fact, that the Gentiles, when they believed, are represented as *"taking hold of God's covenant,"* and thus entering the old Abrahamic church, and sharing its blessings in common with the Jews. To support this assertion, let us note a few passages out of many, both in the Old Testament and in the New:

To the old church of the twelve tribes the Lord sent the prophet Isaiah with this message of consolation and encouragement: "The children which thou shalt have [the Gentiles] after thou hast lost the other [the Jews], shall say again in thine ears, The place is too strait [narrow] for me; give place to me that I may dwell. [Here the Gentiles are represented as pressing into the old church, and filling her to her utmost capacity.] Then shalt thou say in thy heart, Who hath begotten me these, seeing I have lost my children, and am desolate, a captive, and removing to and fro? And who hath brought up these? Before, I was left alone; these, where had they been? Thus saith the Lord God, Behold I will lift up my hand to the Gentiles and set up my standard to the people; and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon

their shoulders. And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers." (Isa. xlix. 20–23.)

"Neither let the son of the stranger, that hath joined himself to the Lord, speak, saying, The Lord hath utterly separated me from his people: neither let the eunuch say, Behold, I am a dry tree. For thus saith the Lord to the eunuchs that keep my Sabbaths, and choose the things that please me, *and take hold of my covenant;* even unto them will I give in my house, and within my walls, a place and a name better than of sons and of daughters. I will give them an everlasting name that shall not be cut off. Also the sons of the stranger, that join themselves to the Lord, to serve him and to love the name of the Lord, to be his servants, every one that keepeth the Sabbath from polluting it, *and taketh hold of my covenant;* even them will I bring to my holy mountain, and make them joyful in my house of prayer." (Isa. lvi. 3–7.)

These words are far from intimating that the old church of Israel should be removed out of the way and utterly destroyed, and a new church established in its place, composed of converted Gentiles. On the contrary, the Lord by his prophet expressly affirms that the believing Gentiles should come and join the old church of Israel, and help to build it up, and thus "take hold on God's covenant" as it then existed, and as it had existed from the days of the patriarchs, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

If this is not conclusive, note the following pas-

sage: Speaking still to the old church of the twelve tribes, the Lord says: "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee [not upon some new church]. For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross darkness the people: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy light [not to the light of a new church], and kings to the brightness of thy rising. Lift up thine eyes round about, and see: all they gather themselves together, they come to thee [not to a new church]: thy sons shall come from far, and thy daughters shall be nursed at thy side. Then thou shalt see and flow together, and thine heart shall fear, and be enlarged; because the abundance of the sea shall be converted unto thee, the forces of the Gentiles shall come unto thee [not to a church to be constituted hereafter]. . . . The sons of strangers shall build up thy walls [not the walls of a new church], and their kings shall minister unto thee: for in my wrath I smote thee, but in my favor have I had mercy on thee. Therefore thy gates shall be open continually; they shall not be shut day nor night [Why?]; that men may bring unto thee [not to some newly-organized church] the forces of the Gentiles, and that their kings may be brought. For the nation and kingdom that will not serve thee shall perish; yea, those nations shall be utterly wasted." (Isa. lx. 1–5, 10–12.)

In the days of the apostles, when a Jew believed in Christ, did he renounce and disown the old Abra-

hamic church, in which he was born, and enter a newly-organized church, of which Abraham, Isaac and Jacob never heard, and of which Moses, David and Isaiah make no mention? Or did he remain in the good old church of Israel, with which God had made an *everlasting covenant,* and invite the believing Gentiles to come and "take hold of God's covenant," and unite with God's church, in which he himself had been born? And did the believing Gentiles refuse to "take hold of God's covenant," and to enter the old church of God, which then had stood for two thousand years, and, despising the good old church, go to work and organize a new church hitherto unknown? To ask these questions is to answer them; for prophets and apostles all agree in representing the old church as still standing, and as lengthening her cords and strengthening her stakes by receiving into her pale the forces of the Gentiles; and neither prophets nor apostles utter one word about the destruction of the old church or the establishment of a new one.

When did Peter and John and the other apostles join any church? It would appear from the record (Acts ix. 18; xxii. 16) that Paul was baptized standing on his feet at the side of his bed; and nothing is said of his going out of the house down to the river, nor of a change of clothing; and before you can get Paul plunged into and under the water, you must put a good many things into the record which God has not put into it. But to return to the point before us. When Paul was baptized, no person

is mentioned as being present except Paul himself and the old disciple Ananias, by whom he was baptized. When, then, did Paul join the church? When did any of the believing Jews mentioned in the New Testament join the church? Never, no never! They were all born in the church.

When we turn to the New Testament, we find the same truth. In writing to the Ephesians, most of whom were Gentiles, Paul says, "For this cause I, Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles, if ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given me to you-ward: how that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ,) which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit [what is this great mystery, Paul?]; that the Gentiles should be *fellow heirs,* and of the same *body,* and partakers of the promise [the Abrahamic promise] in Christ by the gospel." (Eph. iii. 1–6.)

Paul did not know anything about a new body, or a new church organized by John the Baptist, or by the apostles. On the contrary, he declares that the believing Gentiles, by faith, become fellow-heirs with the believing Jews, who were already in the old church.

Hear Paul again: "Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; that at that time

ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: but now, in Christ Jesus, ye who sometime were far off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one [both Jews and Gentiles], and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances [ritual observances]; for to make in himself of twain [Jews and Gentiles] one new man [or body], so making peace; and that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: and came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye [Gentiles] are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints [the holy people of the twelve tribes], and of the household of God; and are built upon the foundation of *the apostles and prophets* [the New and Old Testaments], Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom [Christ] all the building [not two buildings] fitly framed together groweth unto a holy temple [church] in the Lord; in whom ye also [ye Gentiles] are builded together [with the Jews] for a habitation of God through the Spirit." (Eph. ii. 11–22.)

This language cannot be misunderstood by any one who wishes to know the truth. Paul's meaning

agrees exactly with that of Isaiah already quoted; and both apostle and prophet teach precisely the same blessed truth, to-wit: that when the Gentiles believed in Christ they entered into the same church in which the believing Jews were already, and became one body, or church, with the Jews. In other words, both Paul and Isaiah teach that the Jewish church and the Christian church is the same church—the one and only church of the living God.

Here I might well conclude my argument, because further proof seems unnecessary, and even superfluous. But I must be permitted to bring to your attention one more passage, which is alone amply sufficient to establish my claim. Says Paul to the Romans: "I say, then, hath God cast away his people [the Jews]? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the Scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel, saying, Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars, and I am left alone, and they seek my life? But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. Even so, then, at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify my office: if by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them.

For if the casting away of them [the unbelieving portion] be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be but life from the dead? For if the first fruit be holy, the lump is also holy; and if the root be holy, so are the branches. And if some [not all] of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert graffed in among them [the Jews], and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree, boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off that I might be graffed in. Well, because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear. For if God spared not the natural branches [the Jews], take heed lest he spare not thee [the Gentiles]. And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be graffed in: for God is able to graff them in again. For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree which is wild by nature [the unbelieving Gentile world], and wert graffed contrary to nature into a good olive tree [the Abrahamic church], how much more shall these [the Jews], which be the natural branches, be graffed into *their own olive tree?* For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits, that blindness *in part* is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel [all living at that time] shall be saved: as it is written, there shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and he shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob. For the gifts and

calling of God are without repentance." (Rom. xi. 1–29.)

The teaching of Paul here is plain and unmistakable. In a figure he likens the Abrahamic or Jewish church to a good olive tree; and tells us that some of the natural branches, that is to say, the Jews, were broken off because of unbelief, and that the believing Gentiles were graffed into the same olive tree among the believing Jews; not into some new olive tree, but into the good old olive tree, which had stood for ages. He also tells us that if the unbelieving Jews abide not still in unbelief, they shall be graffed back again into their own olive tree, the church of their fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Paul does not teach, what some persons believe, that God dug up the old Jewish church, or olive tree, by the roots, and cast it away, root, trunk and branches, and then planted a new olive tree, the Christian church, altogether different and distinct. No, no! He affirms exactly the contrary. He declares that "the gifts and calling of God are without repentance"; which words, in their connection, can mean no less than this, that God, having called Abraham and the Jews to be his peculiar people, and having given them the covenant and the promises, has never repented; has never cancelled and annulled the call and the gift.

He also teaches that "when the fulness of the Gentiles be come in" [and that fulness seems to be coming in now], the unbelieving Jews, who have hitherto rejected their Messiah, shall repent, believe and come

back to their old church, and accept the Deliverer, who has already come to Zion to turn away ungodliness from Jacob. When that happy day shall dawn, as dawn it must and will, for God has said it; when the covering shall be removed from the blinded eyes of the unbelieving Jews, and when they shall turn and look upon *him whom they have pierced* (as the prophet predicts), "and shall mourn for him as one mourneth for his only begotten son," and shall accept him as their promised Messiah and King, *then* their grievous sin will be forgiven, and they will be graffed back among the people of God, not into a new church, but into their own good olive tree, the old church of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Then the latter-day glory, foretold by the prophets in enrapturing strains, shall begin to blaze from east to west, and from north to south, in bright effulgence over this sin-cursed world, and Jew and Gentile shall send up to heaven one united, triumphant shout, Halleluiah! Halleluiah! O happy day, happy day, may thy gladdening dawn speedily appear!

Just at this point I am reminded that some will raise an objection to the doctrine I am teaching, and cry out, "You are Judaizing." But I reply, that Judaizing consists in teaching that the believing Gentiles ought to be circumcised, and keep the law of Moses, the ceremonial law. This Judaizing tendency existed in the days of the apostles, as we are expressly informed in the fifteenth chapter of the Acts of the apostles; and the apostles and elders assembled at Jerusalem and held a general Synod, or Assembly,

"to consider of this matter"; and, after much deliberation, they decided that it was not obligatory on the Gentiles to keep the Mosaic ritual.

By the way, this question would not have arisen if the believing Jews and Gentiles had not alike believed that they were all together in the old Jewish church. Why did not the apostles say to the Judaizing party, "The old Jewish church is abolished, and along with it the ceremonial law, and now we have a new church, in which these Mosaic rites have no place"? This would have been the shortest and surest way of settling the controversy about circumcision. But no; the apostles and elders did not so teach because they taught the truth. According to their teaching, the ritual law was abolished, but not the Abrahamic church. As Paul says, Christ has "abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances," that is, the ceremonial law. And again: "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances, which was against us, which was contrary to us, and taken it out of the way, nailing it to his cross" (Col. ii. 14). But Paul never intimates that the old church itself was abolished or taken out of the way. That would have ended the controversy; but the grand old apostle would not sacrifice the truth, even for the sake of peace.

The truth is, the old Abrahamic church abides still, but has laid aside her old garments, to put on new ones. When a man puts away his old garments and dons a new suit, is he not the same man still? Clothes do not make the man. And when the Abrahamic

church cast off the Mosaic ritual, which had served its purpose, and which consisted in externals that were not essential, and took on a new ritual that was better adapted to her purpose under new and changed conditions, was she not, and is she not to-day, the same church in every essential particular? Most assuredly this change of mere externals does not destroy her identity.

No, I am not guilty of Judaizing. I indignantly repel the unfounded imputation. When I teach that the church of Christ now is identically the same church in which Abraham, Isaac and Jacob lived and died, and in which Moses, David, Isaiah and all the prophets lived and died, and in which our Lord himself and all the apostles lived and died, and in which the followers of Christ in all ages and climes have lived and died, I am teaching the same doctrine that our blessed Lord and his apostles taught, and am no more guilty of Judaizing than they. I glory in being in communion with the Lord, and with all his holy prophets and apostles. I glory in the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, which has brought me into that precious fellowship and admitted me to his table, which he himself has placed in his kingdom of the twelve tribes.

My beloved hearers, you cannot have sweet fellowship with the glorious Redeemer of lost sinners, you cannot eat and drink at his table in remembrance of him, and in a joyful hope of eternal redemption, until you come into the good old church of the twelve tribes of Israel, because the Lord

has set his table in that church, and has not yet removed it.

Oh! my dear brethren and sisters, whose hearts are made hopeful and happy by the love of Christ, I beseech you to unite with me in praying for the conversion of the scattered remnants of ancient Israel. But we cannot reasonably hope for their conversion if we hold out to them the idea that when they accept Jesus Christ it will be necessary for them to give up the Abrahamic covenant, to renounce the Jewish church, and join a new church, unknown to their fathers, and of which their prophets make no mention. But if we tell them the truth, that we are in identically the same church out of which their fathers were cast because of their unbelief, and if we affectionately and cordially invite them to come back and take their proper places in the church of their fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the church of Moses, David, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, Esther, Nehemiah and Ezra, they may listen to our words of brotherly love and accept our invitation. In no other way can we ever win back to the fold any considerable number of "the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Again, my brethren, I beseech you, from the very depths of my heart, to pray for the salvation of Israel.

## Conclusions.

I. The Abrahamic church and the Christian church are the same church. The Presbyterian church of to-day is only another name for the church of the twelve tribes of Israel.

II. The Lord himself put believers and their children into his church in the beginning, and made his covenant with the children as well as with their parents. He has never repealed this law of infant membership in his church, and no man has authority to exclude from God's church the infant offspring of believing parents.

III. Believing parents, who are faithful in the discharge of their duty to their offspring, have as much encouragement to hope and believe that the Lord will save their children as they have to hope and believe that they themselves are saved; because God has promised as much to the children as he has to the parents, saying, "I will be a God to thee and to thy seed;" and, furthermore, "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring" (Isa. xliv. 3). Many good people do not know of how much comfort and happiness they deprive themselves by not taking hold of God's covenant in all its fulness and extent.

IV. The remnants of Israel will finally believe, accept Jesus the Christ as their Messiah and King, and reënter the church of their fathers, which is now waiting for their return and praying for their salvation.

V. While all who accept Jesus as the Christ, and love and try to follow him, are in the Abrahamic church, imperfectly organized though they be, yet the Presbyterian church is the only one that, like the ancient church, is ruled entirely by elders of the congregation.

## Addenda.

### *An Appeal to all Christians, and Especially to all Presbyterians.*

My dear brethren and sisters, let me remind you of your many obligations to the Jews, and let me plead with you to remember "the lost sheep of the house of Israel," and to pray and labor for their conversion.

When you "take hold of God's covenant" made with Abraham, the friend of God, and consider the truth taught by Paul, that "if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise"; and when you rejoice with Abraham, your father, that God is pledged to be your God, and the God of your seed after you, please to remember that Abraham was a Jew.

When you study the laws of Moses, which teach the gospel by symbols, and contain the germs of all the moral and civil codes of Christendom; and when you sing that sublime song, the ninetieth Psalm, do not forget that "Moses, the man of God," was a Jew.

When your voices are attuned to the inspiring Psalms of David, and your happy souls are lifted heavenward by these enrapturing lays of the sweet singer of Israel, please to remember that David was a Jew.

When you read the prophecy of Isaiah, and your hearts become enthused and your souls catch fire, as he predicts the triumphs of the church and the glory of the latter days, please to remember that Isaiah, the evangelical prophet, was a Jew.

When you commune with Paul, the apostle of grace, and learn from him that, "by grace are ye saved through faith," and that, "being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ," with hearts full of gratitude to God for these words of truth and grace, do not forget that Paul the apostle was a Jew.

When you read the gospel, and the epistles of John, the disciple whom Jesus loved, and hear him say, "God is love," and, "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us, that we should be called the sons of God," remember that John, the apostle of love, was a Jew.

And when, oppressed with guilt and sin, with sad and sorrowing hearts, you turn to the cross of Christ for relief, and there behold "the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world," and see him bearing *your* sins in his own body on the tree, and hear him speaking peace to your aching hearts, and saying, "Son, daughter, your sins, which are many, are all forgiven; go in peace; sin no more;" oh! brethren and sisters, in that happy hour of your soul's redemption, remember that Jesus Christ, your blessed Redeemer, was a Jew.

And when you remember all these things, I beg you to remember the disconsolate sons and daughters of Israel, that are scattered abroad, like sheep having no shepherd, and pray earnestly that the God of their fathers would remember his everlasting covenant, and bless and save the erring children of Abraham.

## An Appeal to the Jews.

*To the Twelve Tribes of Israel Scattered Abroad—Greeting:*

Dear brethren and sisters, will you permit me, an humble adopted son of Abraham, to plead with you a little? From my early years I have loved the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and in my boyhood I was divinely led to "take hold of God's covenant" made with Abraham and to claim an interest in that covenant; and was thus led to hope and believe that Abraham's God would also be my God, and the God of my seed after me; and that faith and hope have made me unspeakably happy. And now in my old age, when gray hairs have already crowned my head, and when I am rapidly drawing near the promised land on high, and when my soul is joyful in the God of my salvation, my heart, which has always felt a tender and loving interest in the dispersed and disconsolate sons and daughters of Israel, yearns with an intense, a consuming longing for your welfare, and especially for your eternal salvation; and every day and night I pray unceasingly that the God of Abraham would fulfill his gracious promise, made through Zechariah the prophet: "And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplication, and they shall look upon me *whom they have pierced,* and they shall mourn for him as one mourneth for his only begotten son, and shall be in bitterness for him as one is in bitterness for his firstborn. And in

that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness." (Zech. xii. 10; xiii. 1.)

Oh! my brethren, may the God of Abraham speedily remove the veil from your eyes, that you may see that it was necessary for the Redeemer of Israel to be "*pierced*" in order to shed that blood, which must be mingled with the living water of his grace, or Spirit, to supply that fountain opened to the house of David, and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness.

Brethren, please to read the fifty-third chapter of your own prophet, Isaiah, and see how completely all things there spoken of are fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth. "He was despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed. All we, like sheep, have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief; when his soul [or life] shall make an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days [shall rise from the dead], and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hands." Then follows a description of his conquests and triumphs. Are not the humiliations, sufferings, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ our Lord a complete fulfillment of these prophecies?

Not only this; look over the world to-day, and see how the other prophecies concerning his glorious conquests, his victories and triumphs, are beginning to be realized. The millions of the Gentile world are flocking to his glorious standard, shouting, "Hosanna to the Son of David: blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord: Hosanna in the highest!"

Brethren, behold your King! Your long-expected Messiah. Bow before him. Receive him as your soul's deliverer, your spiritual Redeemer, your heart's Lord and Master. Soon the once humble Nazarene will show himself to be, what he is in deed and in truth, the Lord God of Sabaoth; and soon the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ. Amen—so let it be.

O brethren! will you not come and receive your King? Will you not unite with us, and help us in promoting his kingdom? Come, and partake with us in this good work, and then partake with us also in the joy and glory. In tender love and kindness, I pray you come. Amen.

# THE CHURCH'S DEPENDENCE UPON CHRIST.

"Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her Beloved?"—SONG OF SOLOMON viii. 5.

FOR beautiful language and touching simplicity of style, the Song of Solomon is unsurpassed. Even if it were not inspired, it would be worthy of frequent perusal for the sake of its rare beauties as a literary composition. In poetic thought, poetic imagery and poetic diction it is unequalled by the poetry of either ancient or modern times. But being, without doubt, inspired of God, it is invaluable, not only as an ancient literary composition of great merit, but also and especially as a repository of divine truth.

Some expressions and allusions in this book have been considered by some indelicate and vulgar; and, indeed, they would be so esteemed in any modern writing. But in forming an opinion of this book, we must consider the fact that the manners and customs of the ancients were different from ours, being far more simple and unsophisticated, and very far removed from the morbid delicacy and morbid refinement which prevail among the moderns.

Indeed, the indelicacy exists not so much in the book, as in our own minds and hearts. "To the pure all things are pure;" and if our minds and hearts were pure, and our imaginations holy, we would find

nothing in all this book to shock our feelings of delicacy or our sense of perfect propriety.

It is a fact of history that the most eminent children of God in all ages and countries have highly prized this portion of the Word of God, and have found in it ample food for pious meditation, while Christians less advanced in the divine life have usually failed to relish and prize it as it deserves.

In this beautiful song the two principal speakers are Solomon and his bride, Solomon being the type of Christ and his bride the type of the church. Such is the interpretation of all good commentators. Keeping this in view, it is not difficult to understand the entire song.

In the text some inquirer asks, "Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness leaning upon her beloved?" Here we have four things worthy of our consideration:

1. The person represented as "coming up from the wilderness." This is none other than the church of the living God, embracing all those who have been redeemed to God by the blood of his Son, out of every kindred, nation and tongue. And what is said here of the church as a whole is also true of each individual member as a part.

2. The person on whom she leans, her beloved. This is Jesus Christ, her Saviour and King, the God-man, the Mediator between God and man, who is able and willing to save unto the uttermost all that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them. These two, as the bridegroom

and the bride, are wedded together in the holiest and tenderest relation, a relation which the lapse of time cannot disturb and which eternity will only strengthen and confirm.

3. The place whence she comes. This place is said to be a wilderness. The church is thus presented to our view, not in her glorified state, but in her state of toil, privation and suffering. This world is a moral and spiritual wilderness, and through this wilderness the church is making her way slowly but surely to the Paradise of God, leaning as she goes on the arm of her Beloved.

The state of the church in the world is fitly compared to a wilderness, because—

(*a*) A wilderness is a dreary, desolate place.

(*b*) In traversing a wilderness there is great danger of being lost, unless the services of a competent guide be secured.

(*c*) In the wilderness there is constant danger of being destroyed by savage beasts, or by more savage men, who infest such places for purposes of robbery and murder.

In all these respects the church is in a moral and spiritual wilderness. The world affords the church no spiritual supplies, no comforts and enjoyments. The world cannot satisfy her longings after immortality, her cravings for spiritual felicity. If the church should look to the world's rich mines of silver and gold, and ask, Where are immortality and peace and happiness unalloyed? countless thousands who have sought these same things from these same mines,

and have lived and died in the fruitless quest, would answer with mournful voice, Not here! not here!

Should she then turn to the springs of sensual pleasure and ask, Oh! where are perfect peace and bliss to be found? deeply wailing voices of pleasure's devotees, who have ruined both soul and body in the vain pursuit, with groans and awful lamentations would respond, Not here! not here!

Were she then to turn to the gilded halls of worldly honor and renown, and repeat the question, Oh! where are unsullied peace and endless happiness to be found? the voices of the many millions who wasted time, talent and fortune in pursuit of honors which, when obtained, soon lost their power to please, and left stings of disappointment and remorse behind, would from deep despair exclaim, Not here! not here!

Who does not know that he has hungerings of soul which this world can never satisfy? The world cannot remove the stings of a guilty conscience, and give in their stead a consciousness of peace with God. And yet who can be happy otherwise? The world and all the things of the world are perishable and are rapidly passing away, and therefore cannot give us immortality. It cannot give us an object about which our warmest affections may cling, with the well-grounded assurance that we shall never be separated. The world cannot give man a knowledge of many things that he wishes to know and should know. In short, hollowness, emptiness, vanity and vexation of spirit are inscribed upon all earthly things in such

legible characters that all but those who are wholly blind may read.

Such, dear brethren, is the place from which the church of God is going up, leaning on her Beloved. Is it not rightly called a wilderness? A moral waste? A spiritual desert? A land of drought and famine? A place of snares and pitfalls? A land of the shadow of death?

And what greatly aggravates the unpleasantness of the church's state, and multiplies her dangers, is the fact that this earthly wilderness is infested with the bitterest enemies. It was in the wilderness where the fiery serpents entered the camp of Israel. And this world is infested with the most venomous of all serpents, that old serpent, the devil, whose poison kills not only the body, but the soul as well. Besides himself, this great adversary has enlisted in his service myriads of fiendish spirits, and myriads more of heaven-daring men, who labor to lure immortal men down to the dark realms of eternal woe.

4. Let us notice, in the last place, the manner of her coming—"leaning on her beloved." You have, doubtless, seen some feeble and delicate wife leaning on the strong arm of her husband for support and guidance. In like manner the church leans upon Christ, her Beloved.

Two things are clearly implied in this act of leaning: first, a sense of weakness and need of support; and, secondly, confidence in the ability and willingness of the person leaned upon to support and guide. Both of these prompt the church to lean on her

Beloved. She feels her own weakness and need of help, and, realizing the truth of her Beloved's declaration, "Without me you can do nothing," with perfect confidence she leans on the everlasting arms for strength and support. She realizes her ignorance and blindness, and her need of light and guidance; and, with the assurance of unquestioning faith, leans on her Beloved and follows him, as the children of Israel followed the pillar of cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night. This is faith. Is there any mystery about it? Is it not simple and plain?

But let us descend to particulars:

The church feels oppressed with a sense of guilt on account of her past enmity to God. She feels the need of reconciliation with God before she can be at peace. She believes that her Beloved, by virtue of his sacrifice and intercession, can make her peace with an offended God; and, therefore, leans on him for this blessing, and not upon her own goodness and obedience. This secures her full and free justification before God.

Again: She feels her need of regeneration and sanctification, and believing in the willingness and power of her Beloved to "sprinkle clean water upon her, and from all her filthiness and all her idols to cleanse her," she leans upon him for these, and not on any external ordinance, nor on methods and means of man's devising.

Once more: She leans upon her Beloved to defend and protect her from all the assaults and strategems of the devil and of wicked men. The language of

her heart is, "God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble;" and thus leaning on his strong arm, she realizes the truth of the promise, "On this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

Lastly: She leans on her Beloved for joy and comfort in the Holy Ghost, and thus experiences the faithfulness of the promise, "I will not leave you comfortless;" "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever, even the Spirit of truth." And although in a wilderness that yields no supplies, yet she receives from above abundant supplies of needed grace, and, with joy unspeakable and full of glory, she journeys onward to the Paradise of God from the wilderness of this world, leaning upon her Beloved. Amen.

# THE SERVANT OF CHRIST SEEKING A BRIDE FOR HIS MASTER.

"And now if ye will deal kindly and truly with my master, tell me; and if not, tell me, that I may turn to the right hand, or to the left."—GEN. xxiv. 49.

GOD had blessed Abraham with great riches and with great spiritual mercies. He had made good his promise to give him a son in his old age. That son had now grown to manhood; and his father Abraham, wishing to see him married and well-settled in life before his own departure from the world, called the steward of his house, his old faithful servant, Eliezer, and bade him go to Mesopotamia to his own kindred, and take a wife for his son Isaac.

Eliezer obeyed his master's command; and taking ten camels, laden with presents for Isaac's future bride and her kindred, he set out upon the long journey. When he had reached Mesopotamia, God by a sign pointed out Rebecca as the virgin intended for Isaac's future wife. Invited to her home, he began at once to make known the object of his visit, and to woo and win a wife for his master's son. He said, "The Lord hath blessed my master greatly, and he is become great; and he hath given him flocks and herds, and silver and gold, and men-servants and maid-servants, and camels and asses. And Sarah,

my master's wife, hath borne him a son in her old age; and unto him hath he given all that he hath." Then relating how God had pointed out Rebecca at the well, he concluded in the words of the text, "And now if ye will deal kindly and truly with my master, tell me; and if not, tell me, that I may turn to the right hand or to the left."

Then the parents and brother gave their consent; and when Rebecca was asked if she would go, she replied, "I will go." The servant then brought forth raiment, and jewels of silver and of gold, and gave them to Rebecca. The next day he took Rebecca and departed. Reaching home, he told Isaac all he had done; and Isaac took Rebecca, and she became his wife.

Now, my hearers, all these things were written for our instruction in the doctrines of salvation. They are all types of things in the gospel of Jesus Christ our Lord. Sarah was a type of the church under the former dispensation. Rebecca was a type of the church under the dispensation in which we now live. Isaac was a type of Christ, the head, or husband, of the church. And Eliezer, the servant, represents the minister of the gospel, whom God sends forth to woo and win souls to Christ; and the whole narrative illustrates the manner in which souls are wooed and won and united to Christ; and also the manner in which Christ deals with those who are wedded to him in the gospel.

I shall call your attention to several particulars, by way of illustrating some important spiritual truths;

and while I am speaking, I beg you to keep it in mind that I have come to you on no fool's errand, but on an errand from my Master in heaven. I come to seek a bride for my Master's Son—that is to say, to woo and win souls to Christ. And remember, that as I come in the name of my Master, if you spurn me and my message, you spurn my Master who sent me; but if you receive me and my message kindly and truly, then you will be dealing kindly and truly with my Master.

And now, my hearers, I will proceed to deliver my message.

We are told that Eliezer was sent to Isaac's *kindred* to seek him a wife. Thus do I come to-day to the kindred of my Master to woo a bride for him. Jesus Christ is bone of your bone and flesh of your flesh.

> "Us to save our flesh assumes;
> Brother to our souls becomes."

And though he now dwells far above you, enthroned in glory, yet he has a fellow-feeling for you, for in his breast there throbs a kindred heart. "For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. Wherefore, in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people. For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able also to succor them that are tempted." (Heb. ii. 16–18.)

Thus, God becomes akin to sinful man in everything but sin. For Christ is God, as well as man; and when the sinner approaches Christ, he approaches God; when the sinner is reconciled to Christ, he is reconciled to God; and when the sinner by faith and love becomes wedded to Christ, he is wedded to God. This truth should encourage you to come to Christ and be wedded to him at once, for he is not only the eternal and all-sufficient Jehovah, but also your brother according to the flesh, possessing a brother's heart, a brother's sympathy and a brother's love.

Again: Abraham's servant declared that his master was a great man, possessed of abundant wealth, and that he had made his son Isaac heir of all; so that Rebecca would obtain both riches and honor by becoming his wife.

In like manner I say to you, My Master is exceedingly great and abundantly rich. He is the eternal Jehovah, who made all things, who governs all things and possesses all things. He has a Son, his only begotten and well beloved, "whom," he declares, "he hath appointed heir of all things." Receive that Son by faith, and you become the children of God; "and if children, then heirs; heirs of God and joint-heirs with the Lord Jesus Christ." All that he has becomes yours; riches, honor, blessedness and glory; "an inheritance that is incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away."

We are told, further, that Abraham's servant gave Rebecca jewels of silver and jewels of gold. Jewels are tokens of friendship and love. And as Eliezer

gave jewels to Rebecca, so I, in the name of my Master, offer you the most precious jewels as tokens of his love. I offer you that most rare and costly jewel, the "white stone," which has written on it "a new name, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it." That white stone is a new heart, with the name Jesus written on it. Others may not be able to look into your heart, and see that name written there; but you see it, notwithstanding, and are satisfied. Doubts may come; wicked men may call you hypocrite; the devil may try to persuade you that you are deceived; but only turn your eyes within, read the name Jesus written on your heart, and you can declare with perfect confidence, "I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine."

Another jewel I offer you is the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. As those jewels of silver and gold were tokens of Isaac's love, so the bread and the wine are tokens of our Saviour's love. And in the name of my Master I offer you these, on condition that you be wedded to Christ by faith, that you say to my Master's servant, as Rebecca said to Eliezer, "I will go." And when you receive these in remembrance of him, you may read in these tokens the love of your departed Lord, and may hear him saying, "My grace is sufficient for thee." "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee."

"The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose,
I will not, I will not, desert to his foes;
That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,
I'll never, no never, no never forsake."

We are told, further, that raiment was given Rebecca. And in like manner I offer you the garments of salvation, the white robe of Christ's righteousness, which will cover and forever hide all your guilt and shame. All your righteousness is as filthy rags; but the righteousness of Christ is perfect, and if you will accept it by faith, you need not fear condemnation and eternal woe.

I offer you, also, the garments of holiness. Would you be holy and pure within, so that the Lord himself cannot see a single impure thought, feeling or motive within your heart? If so, embrace Jesus Christ as your only hope and expectation, and in due time your desire shall be gratified, and you shall be made as holy as the angels in heaven.

And now, my friends, what say you to these overtures of mercy? Are you ready to accept them? Will you deal kindly and truly with my Master? What answer shall I carry him? Will you give me the unspeakable pleasure of conducting you to my Master, the King of kings, the Lord of lords? Are you ready to say, as Rebecca did, "I will go"? Say now, within your heart, I will be the Lord's. I will follow him whithersoever he goes; through evil and through good report; through glory and through shame; in sickness and in health; in prosperity and in adversity; at all times, and in all places, and under all circumstances, I will love and serve the Lord Jesus, and be his, and his only, living, dying, and through all eternity.

Do you thus honestly resolve? If so, I pronounce

you wedded to the Lord Jesus Christ, in the bonds of an everlasting covenant; and I declare, in the name of my Master, that your sins, which are many and great, are all forgiven, and that you are now entitled to all the rights and privileges of the children of God.

But perhaps some poor anxious soul may be ready to inquire, What! is that all that is necessary to salvation? I answer, yes. Union to Christ, and salvation as a result of that union, is a very simple thing. I know that many make it a great mystery; and many an anxious soul is kept in suspense and doubt because of unscriptural views of the subject that prompt him to expect some wonderful and mysterious experience not promised in the Word of God.

God helping me, I will explain how the sinner is married or united to Christ, and becomes a partaker of all the blessings of the gospel. How was Rebecca married to Isaac? When asked if she would go, she replied, *"I will go."* She had never seen Isaac; but she had heard the servant speak of him, of his character, his person, and his condition in life; and she had received from him, through his servant, raiment and jewels of silver and gold, as pledges and tokens of his love. These things inspired confidence, or faith, and love, so that *her heart* went out and embraced him, though far away; and being thus united to him in heart, she was ready to leave father and mother and native land, and go to live and die with Isaac among a strange people and in an unknown land. We read of no marriage ceremony. Their

confidence and love drew them together, and they agreed between themselves to live together as man and wife; and thus they were married.

And thus all true marriages take place. The ceremony is no part of the marriage, and ten thousand ceremonies could not unite two hearts where mutual love and confidence were wanting. In like manner, confidence, or faith, and love alone unite the sinner's heart to Christ.

And now let me ask you, do you not perceive such a sufficiency, such love and loveliness, in Christ that you can love and trust him with all your heart? And do you now thus love and trust him? If so, you are even now united to Christ, and ought to rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

But perhaps some poor soul is ready to say, I am too great a sinner to be wedded to the sinless Christ. Never fear, poor soul! He himself bids you come, and come, too, just as you are. If he is willing, you need not fear. He says, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." "Him that cometh to me, I will in nowise cast out."

It is only by coming to Christ that you can ever be freed from guilt and shame. Believe in him, and be wedded to him, and all your sins are transferred to him, and his righteousness is transferred to you. He will answer for you at the judgment. In no other way can you ever discharge the debt you owe to God's holy law. Were you to live millions of years, you never could pay one farthing, for you are a moral and spiritual bankrupt, and every day you

live away from Christ you are adding to the amount of this debt.

It is only by loving, trusting and serving Christ that you can ever lose your vileness and become pure and holy. To love even a good man has a tendency to refine and ennoble the heart and the life. And in like manner, the soul that loves and trusts the Lord Jesus is gradually, but surely, transformed into his likeness. This is the natural tendency of things; but in the case of the child of God, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit reinforces the natural law and accelerates the process of transformation.

We are told in the sacred record that Isaac loved Rebecca. So does the Lord Jesus love, with a peculiar affection, all those who love and trust him. As the apostle says, "Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word; that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." And can you not, will you not, love and trust him, who so loved, and continues to love, you? How can you withhold your confidence and love from such a loving and lovely Saviour? How can you repay all his love, and all his sacrifices for you, with ingratitude and disobedience? How can you, a poor and needy sinner, neglect and spurn the offers of redeeming love? Oh! sinner, again I ask you, *how?*

We are further told that Isaac took Rebecca, and she became his wife. The relation then established

was to last till death. So they who are wedded to Christ are united for life; not the life of the body only, but for the lifetime of the soul; that is to say, for ever and ever. It is impossible for one thus united to Christ ever to perish. If we could descend to the dark regions of eternal woe, and search through all its dismal caverns, we would never be able to find a single soul that had once been united to Christ. "For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

# THE NATURE OF SAVING FAITH.

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."—Acts xvi. 31.

SINCE faith in Christ is the indispensable condition of salvation, it is exceedingly important that we have clear views of the nature of faith in general, and of justifying or saving faith in particular.

Faith is the act of the mind or soul. The act, not of any one faculty of the mind, but of every faculty, the intellect, the affections and the will.

Faith is the act of the soul believing the truth. Believing a lie is not faith, but credulity. If a portion of error be mingled with a preponderance of truth, there may still be faith in believing it, but such faith is more or less partial and defective.

In every act of faith three things must be considered: the believer, the act of believing, and the thing believed; or, in other words, the agent, the act, and the thing acted upon.

The believer is a human soul, possessing intelligence, affections and the power of choice.

In the act of faith the believer receives the truth as truth, and appropriates it as a part of his store of knowledge, and uses it henceforth as the rule of faith and practice. A man may hear the truth,

and even understand it, and yet remain an unbeliever, because he does not willingly receive and rest upon it as truth. Multitudes in Christian lands are in just this condition—theoretical believers, but practical unbelievers.

The object of faith is the thing believed; and in general any truth may be the object of faith. All the truths of the gospel are the object of evangelical or gospel faith, and are more or less important in the work of salvation; but not all of them are the object of *justifying* faith. It is a fundamental truth of the gospel that there is one living and true God; that the Bible is the Word of God; that Jesus Christ is the Son of God; that Christ was crucified, rose from the dead, and ascended up to heaven; that man as a sinner is under the wrath and curse of God. All these are gospel truths, and are profitable to those who believe them; but the sinner might believe any of them, or all of them, and still not be justified thereby.

Indeed, if we except one single truth, the sinner might believe and cherish every other truth in the Word of God, and yet be a guilty and condemned sinner still. That one truth, the sole object of justifying faith, taught in various ways in many parts of the Scriptures, may be stated thus: The guilt of all our sins was imputed to and laid upon the God-man, Jesus Christ, with his consent, and was condemned and punished in him to the full extent of its demerit; while his righteousness arising from his perfect obedience to the whole law of God, even unto his

death upon the cross, is imputed to every one that believes in him.

By way of analyzing this truth, let us notice that if we strike out a single feature of it, we destroy its nature, and take away its justifying and saving power. If, for example, we strike out the divinity of Christ, we have left only a man obeying and dying; and his obedience and death could have no sufficient virtue to justify and save the sinner who might receive him by faith.

Or if we leave his divinity untouched, and strike out only the humanity of Christ, we take away his power to lay down his life for his people, and the whole atonement is vitiated and rendered worthless, and faith in such a defective truth is powerless to justify.

But let these both remain, Christ's divinity and humanity, and strike out only the imputation of our sins to the Redeemer, and their punishment in him, it still follows that faith in such a truth cannot justify; because, according to the statement thus amended, our sins have never been punished and put out of the way, and are, therefore, still on us, and must be condemned and punished in our own persons.

And though we allow the imputation and punishment of our sins to remain, and strike out only the imputation of Christ's righteousness to us, we are still left without a righteousness sufficient for our justification, and all the faith we might exercise would leave us under sin and guilt and death.

But let all these elements remain, and strike out only the phrase, "that believes in him;" we would thus convert the whole truth into a most dangerous falsehood, and make it teach that a man might be justified and saved, and comforted and cheered by a truth that he had not believed and appropriated.

Let our statement stand unchanged otherwise, and strike out only the little word "all," and substitute the word "some," and make it read, "The guilt of some of our sins was imputed," etc. Though we might believe such a statement, we would still have reason to fear eternal punishment for the rest of our sins, and could experience none of the comfort and joy that flow from the assurance of complete justification.

And, lastly, if we should only substitute "many human beings" for the word "our," so that the sentence would read, "The guilt of all the sins of many human beings was imputed," etc., we would at once take away the appropriating word, that brings the truth home and gives us an interest in it; and though we should believe such a statement with all our hearts, we could derive no more comfort and peace from such a faith than the starving man would from hearing and believing the truth that ten thousand other starving men had just been provided with an abundance of wholesome food.

Every element in this statement, therefore, is essential, so that we cannot strike out any one part without destroying the value of the whole.

Now, when a guilty, trembling sinner takes the

substance of this truth, which I have styled the sole proper object of justifying faith, and carefully weighs and understands it, and can say, and does say, This is the truth; I receive it as the truth; with all my heart I will henceforth cherish and prize it as the truth; and here alone will I confidently rest my salvation;—that very moment he is fully justified before God, and sooner or later will experience that comfort and peace which flow from the assurance of pardon and acceptance in the Beloved. And every sinner who feels the burden of guilt, and who hears the substance of this truth, has God's permission and God's command thus to believe and appropriate the truth to his own justification.

Let us never forget, then, that faith is not simply believing the truth, though this is an essential element of faith. But, in addition to this, there must be the act of receiving and appropriating the truth to one's own use and benefit. And this is the very essence of genuine justifying faith.

A man may swallow wholesome food and still receive no benefit from it. Before he can receive nourishment from the best of food, he must, by digestion and assimilation, appropriate the nourishing properties of that food. Otherwise, he might eat to satiety and yet perish to death.

I remember such a case. A good elder in my own congregation suffered for months with ulceration of the stomach, which destroyed that organ's power to digest and assimilate, and thus appropriate the nourishing properties of his food, and, though eating vora-

ciously, he wasted away to a skeleton, and literally starved to death.

Truth—all truth—is the proper nourishment of the mind. Divine truth, spiritual truth, is the proper food of the spiritual life. Christ crucified and risen for the sins of the ungodly is the only food that can give life and peace to a guilty soul. And in the spiritual world, just as in the material, food must be received, digested, assimilated and appropriated, or else the spiritual man starves and perishes for evermore.

Let us also bear in mind that it is not faith itself, but the truth, that justifies and saves. Eating, digesing and assimilating do not save our bodies from starvation. These processes, however necessary, are but means, or instrumentalities by which the nourishing properties of *the food* are incorporated into the body to give it life and strength. So faith is but an instrument by which saving truth is brought into the soul for its justification and eternal life.

This is why the heathen are not saved. They have faith; faith just as implicit, perhaps, as ours. But it is faith in a falsehood, and falsehood cannot save.

Let us now conclude this discussion with the following practical inferences:

1. The more fully we comprehend any gospel truth, and the more vigorously we grasp and receive it, the more richly will we be blessed and strengthened thereby.

2. The man who comprehends, receives and appropriates the largest amount of evangelical truth, other

things being equal, will be the strongest and happiest Christian.

3. Any failure to understand and believe any important truth of the gospel will more or less mar our peace and retard our growth in grace.

4. Every admixture of error, however small, like poison mingled with wholesome food, will to a greater or less extent impair the usefulness, health and peace of the child of God.

5. Reading, hearing, meditation and prayer are the means to be employed for increasing our faith, and we cannot be too diligent and constant in the use of these divinely appointed means of grace.

6. Neglecting to employ these means of grace is the prime cause why so many Christians are weak and sickly, and are left to grope their way in comparative darkness, doubt and gloom.

And now one word, in closing, to the unbeliever. My dear friend, without faith you must forever perish. Our Lord himself, your Lord as well as mine, said, "He that believeth not shall be damned." These are most awful words, but the whole power of Omnipotence is engaged to sustain them. Can you gain your own consent to be damned? If not, then hasten, O lost sinner! to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

Do you reply, I have often tried to believe, but cannot; all my efforts are useless and vain? Yes, my dear friend, I know that; and your most strenuous efforts will be forever vain until God shall give you a new heart that can and will believe. Therefore, while striving with all your heart to believe,

pray with all your heart, and beseech the Lord your God with strong crying and tears to give you a new heart and put within you a right spirit.

Your Heavenly Father is far more willing to bestow this gift than you are to receive it. Oh! hasten to his foot-stool. Fall at his feet and implore his mercy. Cry out, with the poor publican, "God be merciful to me, a sinner." Do not despair. Cease not to pray. Eternal life is before you. Eternal death pursues you. Look away from the borders of the pit to the cross of Calvary, and "Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world." None ever perished praying and looking to Jesus.

# GOD'S WILL OUR RULE OF LIFE.

"Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"—Acts ix. 6.

WHEN man was created and placed in the Garden of Eden, his will was in perfect harmony with the will of God. This concurrence of Adam's will with the will of his Maker was the result of his having been created in the image of God. Truth being one, and never at variance with itself, it is impossible for those who hold it without admixture of error to maintain contradictory thoughts and ideas; and since perfect holiness consists in the maintenance of truth and in the practice of its precepts, it follows necessarily that holiness, or virtue, is one and uniform, and all perfectly holy intelligences will possess the same will, and will act invariably in harmony with one another.

Were it possible for two perfectly holy beings to be equally infinite in all their attributes, their wills would necessarily coincide throughout, and all their actions would converge to one and the same point and tend to the production of one and the same result. But if one be inferior to the other in any particular, they will go together only so far as the inferior one is able to go. But as far as he does go, the inferior being will be in perfect accord with his superior.

Thus it is with God and all other perfectly holy beings, whether they be angels or "the spirits of just men made perfect." Moved by the same undivided principle of holiness, they all conspire with the will of God, and co-operate, as far as each one is able, in carrying out the great designs of the divine government. Where the capacities of each one fail, there he stops; but as far as he is able to go, each one, in harmony with all the rest, does all he can to further the one great end.

The concurrence of the wills of perfectly holy beings in giving all glory to God is beautifully described by John in Rev. v. 9–14. The redeemed spirits from earth begin by singing "A new song, saying, Thou art worthy . . . for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred and tongue and people and nation." Then the angels round about the throne, and the elders and living creatures, are introduced to "the number of ten thousand, and thousands of thousands," joining in with the redeemed and saying, "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power and riches and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and blessing." Such are the wills, and such the employments, of all perfectly holy spirits.

So, also, Christians in this life, in proportion to their holiness and intelligence, unite in this great end of giving all the glory to God. However, as their holiness and intelligence are far inferior to that of angels and glorified spirits, they come far short in their efforts to advance God's glory. The more intel-

ligent and holy they become, the more perfectly will their wills be conformed to the will of God, and the more uniform and consistent will be their course of life.

The will of man, which, at his creation, was in perfect harmony with the will of God, did not long continue so. When Eve brought to Adam the forbidden fruit and urged him to eat, he debated the question in his own mind whether he should conform his will to the will of his wife, which was now the will of the devil, or continue to conform it to the will of his Creator. He decided in favor of the former, and from that moment his will took a direction exactly opposite to the divine will.

Hence, the necessity for *conversion,* or the turning back of man's will into the channel in which it formerly flowed. Every son and daughter of Adam's race must be thus converted, for it is written, "There is none righteous, no, not one. There is none that understandeth; there is none that seeketh after God. They have all gone out of the way; they have together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good; no, not one" (Rom. iii. 10–12). All men, without exception, are here represented as having gone out of the way, as having become alienated from God, and utterly opposed to his holy will.

The apostle elsewhere expresses the same truth even more emphatically: "The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be" (Rom. viii. 7). No language can be stronger than this; and it clearly teaches that

the will of the natural man is diametrically opposed to the holy law, or will, of God.

This teaching of the Word of God is confirmed by the testimony of experience. Man needs but to compare his own will with the will of God as revealed in the holy Scriptures to be forever convinced of the utter lack of harmony between himself and his Maker.

This conversion of the human will is not wrought in the soul by the man himself, but is the work of the Holy Spirit. For the will of man has received an impetus that carries it in an opposite direction to the will of God, and is itself averse to any change. Accordingly we are told, "It is God that worketh in you both to will and to do, of his good pleasure" (Phil. ii. 13). "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power" (Ps. cx. 3). In other words, God gives the power both to will and to perform that which is holy and right.

When this change is wrought in the heart by the Holy Ghost, the first inquiry of that new-born soul is, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" He no longer "confers with flesh and blood." No longer has a separate, much less an opposite, will of his own. He has surrendered his will, his very self, to God, and feels, "How sweet to lie passive in his hands, and know no will but his." He is now a new creature, and acts from new motives. Before this change, *self* ruled supreme, and was the main-spring of all his actions. But now God is enthroned in the heart, and God's glory the one motive that determines every

issue. Once God's law was burdensome and grievous; now, with the Psalmist, he exclaims, "O, how love I thy law; it is my meditation all the day." Once he looked upon God as the stern ruler and judge, but now as the kind Father and the God of love. Once he saw no beauty in holiness; now all else appears as unseemly deformity.

All this finds fit illustration in Saul of Tarsus. "Breathing out threatenings and slaughter" against the disciples of the Lord, he set out for Damascus, with authority from the high priest to arrest and bring to Jerusalem all who followed the Lord Jesus, thus defying the King of heaven and impiously endeavoring to overthrow his kingdom.

But behold! He is struck to the ground by the power of that God against whom he was waging war. "And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus, whom thou persecutest. And he, trembling and astonished, said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"

What a change! One moment ago, the proud rebel against God and the unrelenting persecutor of the Lord Jesus: now, the humble, submissive subject, meekly asking of his Lord, "What wilt thou have me to do?" His own imperious will, which had been his sole guide hitherto, is now made subject to the divine will.

And were we to follow his subsequent history, we would find him ever afterward earnestly striving to

do the will of God, thus evincing his honesty and sincerity in asking the question, "What wilt thou have me to do?" After traveling over nearly all of the known world, and suffering innumerable hardships as the herald of a despised gospel, he suffered martyrdom at Rome in attestation of the truth of that gospel he had once sought to destroy.

Now, let us bring this truth home to ourselves. It is the duty of every Christian to strive to know and to do the will of God. For, as we have seen, God's will, being founded in perfect holiness, justice and truth, is the only perfect standard of duty. Therefore, we should conform to it in all things, without stopping to calculate what sacrifices it may cost.

Should he require us, as he does, to adorn the doctrines of Christ in all holy conversation and godly living, or should he send adversity and affliction, as he often does, the language of our hearts should be, "Do with us, Lord, as seemeth good unto thee."

Should he bid us bear testimony to him by proclaiming his gospel to our fellow-men; yea, though he send us to distant lands, away from home, kindred and friends, to live and die in defence of the gospel, we should, without a murmur, give up all earthly objects and pursuits fame, pleasure, wealth and ease, and say, "Yes, I'll go, glad in heathen lands to dwell."

And now, my impenitent friends, would you know the will of God concerning you? Are you ready to cry out, with Saul of Tarsus, "What wilt thou have

me to do, Lord?" If so, in the name of God, and as his ambassador, let me answer your question.

In the first place, God's will is that you be saved by faith in Jesus Christ. For the Scriptures declare that he "will have all men to be saved and to come unto the knowledge of the truth" (1 Tim. ii. 4). Hence, if you are not saved, it will be your own fault. It will be solely because you would not be saved.

Not only is God willing to save you, he is positively unwilling that you should be lost. "The Lord is not slack concerning his promises, as some men count slackness, but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance" (2 Pet. iii. 9).

Our God does not wish you to be forever lost. He has long borne with your impenitence and unbelief, and still entreats you to turn to him and live. He has given you the most encouraging promises, and has used every means of argument and persuasion. He has graciously condescended to reason with you, when he might justly have banished you from his glorious presence forever: "Come, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool" (Isa. i. 18). He has invited you to come freely, "without money and without price." He has promised, if you will come, to make you holy and happy, like himself: "I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean."

Would you be pure, bright and burning spirits,

without spot or blemish or infirmity? Would you bask in the light of infinite intelligence, and bathe in the pure fountains of holiness and happiness? Would you listen to the instructions of the wisest teacher, and catch the words of heavenly wisdom as they fall like drops of honeyed sweetness from the lips of this Teacher of teachers? Would you drink deep draughts from the sweet waters of benevolence and charity, and never know aught of anger, malice and unhappy misanthropy? Would you be forever freed from all those burning lusts, those wayward desires, and their consequent bitterness of feeling and uneasiness of mind? Would you be freed from pain and grief and sorrow, and conducted at last to "the very seat of bliss, where pleasure in perfection is"? If you would have all these, then come to God, receive remission for all your sins, and submit in all things to his will concerning you.

And now, dear friends, what is your answer? Will you come? Or shall I return to my Master, and tell him that you reject his overtures? That though he wills you to be saved, you prefer to be damned? Shall I tell him that?

If, in opposition to the will of God, you have resolved to go to hell, then let me say to you again, *Go*. Go, and keep company forever with demons and damned spirits from earth. Go, enter those abodes of darkness and gloom and misery and despair, where light and joy and peace and hope never come. Go, mingle your voices with those of demons and fiends in cursing the name of that holy God who wished

you to be saved, and you would not; but remember, your curses will neither harm him nor avail to assuage your intolerable anguish. Go, associate with the groaning, wailing, writhing spirits of woe, who spend eternal years in gnashing their teeth, in cursing each other, themselves and their God. Yes, if you prefer such society to the pure, refined, delightful society of heaven, go and enjoy it, if joy can be found amid fire and smoke and brimstone and wailings and cursings and groans and horrible imprecations.

But as you go, remember, "*As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from his way and live.*"

# AN EXPOSITION OF ROMANS VI. 4.

PERHAPS no portion of God's Word has been less understood and more seriously perverted than this. Some of the most dangerous errors of the Greek and Roman Catholic churches of ancient times, as well as much of the unscriptural teaching of Baptists, Campbellites and Mormons in modern days, originated in a false interpretation of this passage. This text, misunderstood and perverted, has in all ages been the main resource of immersionists, from Tertullian, in the second century, down to J. R. Graves, Alexander Campbell and Joe Smith, the Mormon. Therefore, before entering upon the direct exposition of the text, we will storm and capture this stronghold of the immersionists. And then, instead of spiking their big gun, will proceed to turn it, heavily loaded, against their own ranks.

"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

Now, please observe that the Word of God here affirms that by baptism we are buried *into death;* whereas the immersionist teaches that we must be buried *in water.* Death is one thing and water is another. The Lord buries his people into death: the immersionist in water. Whom shall we follow?

But, says the immersionist, water is implied, even though not expressly mentioned, because there can be no baptism without water. Let us see. Not so thought John the Baptizer when he said that Christ should "baptize with the Holy Ghost" (Mark iii. 3). Not so thought our Lord when he said, "Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost" (Acts i. 5). Not so thought the inspired apostle when he said, "By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body" (1 Cor. xii. 13). There may be, therefore, and there certainly is, a scriptural and a very precious baptism without water.

What right, then, has any mortal man to see water between the lines, when the Lord has expressly put death in the lines? Who has the right to alter and amend the Word of God by striking out the word *death* and inserting in its place the word *water?*

And yet only last May we heard from the pulpit the following assertion: "We read in the Scriptures that in the days of the apostles, when one wished to be baptized, he went down into the water, was buried in it, and then came up out of it." The next day, when respectfully asked to show where the Scriptures said anything about a burial in water, he cited this text, thus showing that he had erased the word death and substituted therefor the word water. And he is not alone in his sin. Thousands of others are doing the same thing. And then, after thus shamefully mutilating the divine Word, they flout the false charge in the faces of others as good as themselves that they are unbaptized, and unfit for a

place at the Lord's table, because they have never been buried in the liquid grave!

This text, and the similar one in Colossians ii. 12, are the sole foundation for the immersionist's theory that water baptism is a sign or symbol of the burial and resurrection of Christ and his people.

Let us now consider this theory. According to the faith of all Christians, both orthodox and heretical, the sacrament of the Lord's Supper represents Christ and his work for our salvation. According to the faith of Presbyterians, and of multitudes of other good Christians, the only other sacrament, which is baptism, symbolizes the Holy Spirit, and his indispensable work in and upon our hearts for our regeneration and sanctification. Christ's work and the Spirit's work make up the whole of our salvation. And, according to this scriptural and common-sense view, the two sacraments symbolize and set forth visibly the whole of our redemption.

But immersionists, who erroneously make baptism represent the burial and resurrection of Christ, have no sacrament at all to tell them about the Holy Spirit and his blessed work, without which no man can be saved. So that, according to their theory, the half of our salvation remains untaught and unrepresented by sacramental symbol.

Moreover, why should we have two sacraments to represent the work of Christ? The immersionist will answer, One reminds of his death and the other of his burial and resurrection. But we reply, it is wholly unscriptural to limit the sacrament of the Supper to

the death of Christ. When he instituted this sacrament, he said to his disciples, "Do this in remembrance *of me*" (Luke xxii. 19). While this sacrament does remind us of his death, it does at the same time remind us of his whole life and work. The Christian at the Lord's table who does not remember Jesus from the manger in Bethlehem to his mediatorial throne in glory, fails more or less to obey his dying command, "This do in remembrance of me." Where, then, is the need of another sacrament to remind us of Christ?

But still further, why should we have any sacrament at all to remind us of *the burial* of Christ? His resurrection, we grant, is of fundamental importance, and every recurring Sabbath day is a reminder of that; but what does his burial avail for our salvation? The Scriptures tell us again and again that Christ was born for us, lived for us, humbled himself for us, obeyed for us, suffered for us, was made a curse for us, died for us, rose from the dead for us, and ascended into heaven for us; but it is never even intimated that he was buried for us. From the Word of God we can see no reason why our redemption would not have been just as complete as it is now, even if Jesus had never been buried at all. And in the name of the Lord, and in behalf of the sacred cause, we call upon the advocates of the burial theory to point out one text of Scripture that teaches plainly that Christ's burial avails anything for our salvation, or that water baptism was instituted to remind us of the burial of our divine Redeemer. Why, then,

should we believe and teach that one of the two sacraments was intended to remind us of an event in our Lord's history which is of no consequence whatever; and especially when, according to this theory, we are left without any sacrament at all to remind us of the work of the Holy Spirit, without which none can be saved? Such an ignoring of the blessed Spirit's work must be most offensive to his loving heart.

The burial theory of baptism is, therefore, unscriptural and unreasonable. Hence, we ask, Can baptism be valid when the administrator perverts its meaning by teaching that it represents the burial and resurrection of Christ, instead of the purifying power of the Holy Ghost? If, in administering the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, we should teach the people that they must eat and drink in remembrance of the Holy Ghost, would that supper then be a valid sacrament?

But now let us turn the theory of the immersionists against their practice. Let us suppose, for a moment, that we ought to be baptized with water just like Christ was buried, or just as the dead are buried now. What then? It would certainly follow that the practice of the immersionist is wholly wrong. For who ever saw a dead man walk into his own grave? Or who ever saw a dead man plunged or thrust down into his grave? And who ever saw a dead man rise up out of his grave as soon as he was put into it?

Christ's burial-place was a room cut out of a solid rock above ground, with a door in the side, and looked more like an ordinary house than a modern grave;

and when he was lovingly carried into it, the act of burial was very much like the act of bearing a corpse into the room of an ordinary house, but not at all like the act of the immersionist in plunging a living man into the "liquid grave."

We have often heard immersionists say that we ought to be baptized just as we will be buried when we die. Well, let us ask, when our friends die, do we take them out to the burying-ground, and thrust or plunge them into the ground? Instead of this, we lay them gently down, and then put the earth upon them, just as we apply the water to the candidate in baptism.

We are aware that this is but an *argumentum ad hominem,* but it is amply sufficient to show that the immersionists' theory contradicts their practice, and that, upon their own principles, their favorite text is more in our favor than in theirs.

Thus have we fulfilled our promise to storm and capture this stronghold of the immersionists, and then to turn their big gun, heavily charged, upon their own ranks. And now, with their own gun, we give them a parting shot: If, as they claim, this verse teaches that water baptism is a literal burial of the living body in a liquid grave, then the Baptists are wholly wrong in opposing the disciples of Alexander Campbell. For the latter clause of the verse positively affirms that after we have been buried with Christ by baptism into death, we arise to walk in newness of life. Nothing can be plainer, therefore, than the fact that Paul is speaking of a baptism that

unites us to Christ, so that his death becomes our death, his burial our burial, and his resurrection our resurrection; in other words, a baptism that renews our souls and washes away our sins. If, then, the apostle is here speaking of *water* baptism, he assuredly teaches the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, according to Campbellism; and, to be consistent, the Baptists should all join the Campbellites, and believe and teach as they do, namely, that not "the blood of Jesus Christ," *but water,* "cleanseth us from all sin."

And having gone thus far, the united hosts of Baptists and Campbellites can find no logical stopping place short of Mormonism. For the Mormons, by immersion in water, wash away their sins every Sabbath. And if, as the Campbellites teach, water baptism washes away sin, we cannot be baptized too often; and the Mormons are nearer right than the Campbellites.

Having thus removed the rubbish out of the way, and having swept aside the false interpretations with which errorists have obscured the real meaning of the text, we are now prepared for its fuller exposition.

In the preceding chapters of this epistle, Paul had set forth the doctrine of justification by faith, without the deeds of the law. Now, in this chapter he anticipates and answers an obvious objection to that doctrine. "What shall we say, then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?" (Vs. 1.) That is to say, inasmuch as we are saved by grace, through faith, without the deeds of the law, we need no longer keep the law; but rather let us continue in sin, be-

cause the more we sin, the more will God's grace be magnified in our salvation.

Having thus stated the objection, he proceeds to give us the answer: "God forbid! How shall we who are dead to sin live any longer therein?" (Vs. 2.) That is to say, the same grace that justifies us by faith crucifies us to the love and practice of sin, and makes us alive to God, to holiness and good works. We cannot, therefore, continue in sin, we cannot wish to sin, we cannot gain our own consent to sin, because we *"are dead to sin."*

How did we die to sin? The answer to this question the apostle gives us in verse 3: "Know ye not that as many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?" That is to say, we died with Christ, because of our union with him. This union was brought about by baptism—"baptized into Christ." Not water baptism, for then we would have the absurd doctrine of baptismal regeneration; but the baptism of the Holy Ghost. "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body" [that is, Christ] (1 Cor. xii. 13). This, the true baptism, of which water baptism is but the sign or symbol, secures our union with Christ, so that his death becomes our death. We cannot, therefore, continue in sin, because we are dead to sin, having been by the Holy Ghost baptized into Christ, and, in particular, into the death of Christ.

And now, in this fourth verse, Paul draws his grand conclusion: "*Therefore* [because of all this] we are buried with him by baptism into death; that

like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." That is to say, as we were baptized by the Holy Ghost into Christ, so that his death is our death, it follows that we were in him when he was buried, and were buried with him. Our old man of sin was crucified with him, and was buried with him; and just as he rose from the dead on the third day, even so do we rise with him; and leaving the old nature behind us in the tomb, buried to rise no more, we go forth new creatures, to walk henceforth in newness of life.

Of course, this is what took place potentially, and in the purpose of God, at the time of Christ's crucifixion and resurrection. Our whole salvation was then accomplished potentially; but the salvation of each individual becomes an experienced fact only when he believes in the Lord Jesus Christ.

We are now fully prepared to comprehend the length and breadth and height and depth of the apostle's great argument: By our baptism into Christ by the Spirit of God, we died to sin, and our old natures, thus crucified with him, were buried with him to rise no more. And out of this spiritual death and burial, our renewed souls arose to spiritual life, to walk henceforth, not in sin, but in a new life of righteousness and holiness. Therefore we will not, cannot, continue in sin. Consequently, the objection that salvation by grace, through faith, encourages laxity of life, falls to the ground.

This exposition is confirmed by a consideration of

verse 6: "Knowing this, that our old man [the old Adam in us] is crucified with him, that the body of sin [our inbred corruption] might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." From this verse we learn *what that is that is dead and buried;* according to the apostle, it is the "old man" of sin, the old Adam in us. It is lawful to bury the dead, but not the living. Therefore, let the "old man," dead in Christ, be buried forever out of sight; and this is exactly what the Holy Spirit accomplishes for us when, at our regeneration, he baptizes us into the death and burial of Jesus Christ. God buries the dead: the immersionists bury the living.

Thus is there no trace of water in this famous passage. All is spiritual: a spiritual union with Christ, a spiritual death, a spiritual burial, a spiritual resurrection; and all brought about by a *spiritual baptism.* To lug in water baptism, as immersionists do, and to attribute these mighty spiritual results to a material ordinance, is to ignore the work of the blessed Spirit of God, is to rob one of the richest and sweetest passages of the Bible of all its meaning and make it teach the sheerest nonsense. In view of the persistence with which immersionists continue, from age to age, to eviscerate and impoverish this truly sublime passage, the writer has felt called upon, as an honest lover of the truth, to rise up and enter his earnest protest.

## THE ISLE OF THE BLEST.

In visions of fancy I was wafted away
To a beautiful isle in the midst of the deep,
The home of blest beings, who never decay,
Whose hearts never ache, and whose eyes never weep.

Rich fields of luxuriance extended afar,
More lovely than Tempe's famed valley of old,
Green meadows and gardens and orchards most rare
With fruits more delicious than th' apples of gold.

Cool fountains more pure than the brook of Siloa
Meandered through lilies and violets' beds;
Green hills more sublime than the Mount of Gilboa,
Reared high in the ether their sun-gilded heads.

No fierce, chilling winds from the north ever blow,
Nor frosts ever come, vernal flowers to nip;
No poisonous reptiles or plants ever grow;
No venomous insects the morning dews sip;

But zephyrs all-laden with odors of spring,
And balmy as winds from the heights of Mount Hermon,
Sweet perfumes of spices and frankincense bring
From regions where grow the sweet orange and lemon.

The flowers of spring-time unceasingly bloom,
And birds of the forest most joyfully sing,
Rude Winter, the mother of tempests and gloom,
Avails not her pall o'er creation to fling.

The beings who dwell in this land of delight
Are pure as the cherubs that sing in the skies,
Or seraphs that burn in the life-giving sight
Of him who enlightens all heaven with his eyes.

No bloodthirsty fiend ever raises his arm
In malice to murder his fellow or friend;
No neighbor e'er wishes his neighbor to harm,
Or labors the ties of affection to rend.

No sland'rer, more base than the beasts of the wood,
With tongue more envenomed than th' serpents of old,
Is here to defame all the spotless and good,
And rob them of names more availing than gold.

No false, fawning friends in prosperity's hour
Cling close as the leech to his blood-yielding prey,
And then, when the clouds of adversity lower,
With hearts all unfeeling, turn coldly away.

No fiendish seducer, who whispers of love,
With heart as deceitful as demons of hell,
E'er wins a heart tender as spirits above,
Then breaks it, and bids it forever farewell.

But brother and sister and neighbor and friend,
United together in holiest band,
In brotherly concord, delightfully blend
Their hearts, like the dwellers on heavenly land.

The sound of the death-telling knell is ne'er heard,
Borne mournfully over the hill and the dell;
The lips of kind friends never utter that word,
That hardest and saddest of words—fare thee well!

O happiest island! enraptured, I cried,
And thrice happy beings who roam o'er your plains.
Sweet fields of delight! here I'll ever abide,
In freedom from troubles, vexations and pains.

In union ecstatic with beings so pure,
My days shall glide sweetly and swiftly along;
No false, fading prospect my spirits shall lure
To paths of temptation, transgression and wrong.

Long, long have I sought a secluded retreat,
Away from the strifes and contentions of man;
Long, long have I sighed for a solitude sweet,
A home in a happy, a far distant land.

Then hail, happy island! All hail, peaceful shore!
Receive me, and keep me forever thine own;
My sighings and weepings forever are o'er,
The clouds and the darkness forever have flown.

Alas! the bright vision has taken its flight!
'Twas fair, but as fleeting as mists of the morn;
The Isle of the Blessed has vanished from sight,
And with it all joy from this heart has been torn.

Oh! must I still dwell in this world of turmoil,
Where all is so false, and as changing as air?
And is there no home where I'll cease from my toil,
No more to be cheated by pleasure's false glare?

Yes, yes, there's a land of the purest delight;
A home to the weary, sad wanderer given;
A land which is never enshrouded in night;
That land is above, that home is in heaven.

# WHAT IS LIFE?

"What is life?" A purling stream,
Through thorns and flowers flowing;
Now smooth, now ruffled doth it seem,
Yet onward ever going,
Watering each flower in its course,
And stealing from it fragrance;
Still hastening onward from its source,
Toward its wide ocean-entrance.

"What is life?" A post that flies
From stage to stage without delay;
At each it gives and takes supplies,
Then speeds it swiftly on its way.
To some it brings the expected prize,
To gladden weary hearts;
To others, sorrows, groans and cries,
And disappointments, smarts.

"What is life?" A mountain high,
That reaches up to heaven;
But he who will resolve to try
May climb, and gain the rest that's given;
While at its base a pit is placed,
For those who choose the downward way;
To this the course is easy traced,
But ah! it leads *from* endless day.

"What is life?" 'Tis but a flower
That opens to the morning sky;
Sometimes 'tis plucked to deck the bower
Where cruel death is wont to lie.

But when it's left unhurt to bloom,
It sports its gladsome hours away;
And then ere long to fruit give room,
Which ripens in the sun's bright ray.

"What is life?" A bright sun, gleaming
To light our little world of clay;
Now veiled in cloud, now bright 'tis beaming,
But hastening to the close of day.
Its course is short and often clouded,
But bright it shines at other times;
And when it sets, from view enshrouded,
'Tis but to shine in other climes.

"What is life?" A precious diamond,
Set in base and worthless clay,
To form a crown for aged Time,
And deck his furrowed brow a day;
But death will come and take that jewel
From out that base and worthless clod,
And, 'mid the shouts of myriad angels,
Replace it in the crown of God.

COLUMBIA, S. C., *January* 15, 1846.

## MY LIFE.

My life *was* like the dreary night,
When winter winds are howling round,
And not a star or ray of light
Could in the dismal sky be found.
Yet ere that gloomy night was past,
A bright and cheering star arose;
It was the star that gilt the East,
The "Star of Hope" that brought repose.

My life *is* like the summer night,
When odorous zephyrs steal around,
And balmy dews are sparkling bright,
Like diamonds, on the thirsty ground.
Calm is the sky, illumed by Hope,
That lights and guides and cheers me on,
To where celestial gates shall ope
And take the weary wanderer home.

My life *was* like a ship that rides
Upon the ocean's heaving breast,
When waves are beating o'er its sides,
And raging winds give it no rest.
But 'mid the raging storm there rose
A hand that calmed the angry tide,
And bade the billows cease their throes
And let that vessel safely ride.

My life *is* like the ship that steers
Before the gently blowing gales,
When calm and clear the sky appears,
And undisturbed the vessel sails;

While on before her Hope still shines,
To point her to that happy shore,
Where she shall anchor, and shall find
A haven that she'll leave no more.

COLUMBIA, S. C., *January* 30, 1846.